

**LEADERSHIP EFFICACY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE  
FREE STATE PROVINCE AND ITS EFFECT ON THEIR LEADERSHIP  
PRACTICES AND THE SCHOOL CLIMATE**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

I Patricia Lulama Ndamani declare that the thesis “Leadership Efficacy of Secondary School Principals in the Free State Province and its Effect on their Leadership Practices and the School Climate” is my own work and has not been submitted previously for any degree.

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Patricia Lulama Ndamani

## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my late mother Angelinah Nokwakhe Ndamani.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank God almighty who has been with me from the beginning to the end of this long journey.

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## **Abstract**

This study assessed the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals in the Free State Province of South Africa. The aim of the study was to assess the leadership efficacy of school principals in different dimensions of their leadership roles, and to examine the factors (personal and contextual) which affect their leadership efficacy in secondary schools in the Free State Province. These leadership dimensions are: Instructional Leadership and Staff Development, School Climate Development, Community Collaboration, Data-based Decision making Aligned with Legal and Ethical Principles, Resource and Facility Management, Use of Community Resources, Communication in a Diverse Environment, and Development of School Vision.

In this study both the qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. The sample for this study included 84 secondary school principals from the five districts, that is, the Motheo, Xhariep, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyane and the Fezile Dabi districts. Data was collected by using both questionnaires and semi structured interviews. The questionnaire had both closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions examined the perceptions school principals have about their leadership. Open-ended questions looked at factors affecting the school principals' leadership practices.

The results of the study reveal that the leadership efficacy of school principals in the Free State Province, at an overall mean of 5.27, is moderately high. A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in Leadership Efficacy dimensions for secondary school principals. There were statistically significant differences in Leadership efficacy dimensions for the principals, this means that each of the Leadership Efficacy dimensions differed significantly from each other dimension.

MANOVA was also run to determine the effect of gender, experience and the geographical location of the school on leadership efficacy. The findings reveal that there were no significant effects of gender, experience and geographical location on leadership efficacy. So, it seems that leadership efficacy did not differ between principals with different genders, experience and geographical locations. The analysis of qualitative data from the open-ended questions and semi structured interviews also revealed a number of personal, contextual and external factors which affect the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals. These findings also reveal the effect of these factors on the leadership practices of school principals.

There are different views on the role of school principals as leaders worldwide and in South Africa. This study will, therefore, make a contribution in the continuing discourse or debate on the leadership roles of school principals in South African schools.

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**APPENDIX D - Research Ethics Requirements**

**APPENDIX E - Questionnaire to School Principals**

**APPENDIX F – Interview Questions**

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AASA</b>	- American Association of School Administrators
<b>ACE</b>	- Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership
<b>ANOVA</b>	- Analysis of Variance
<b>ASCD</b>	- Association for Supervision and Curriculum
<b>ELCC</b>	- Educational Leadership Constituent Council
<b>ISLLS</b>	- Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium
<b>MANOVA</b>	- Multivariate Analysis of Variance and Assumptions
<b>NAESP</b>	- National Association of Elementary School Principals
<b>NASSP</b>	- National Association of Secondary School Principals
<b>NMLC</b>	- National Management Leadership Committee
<b>NCSL</b>	- National College for School Leadership
<b>NQF</b>	- National Qualifications Framework
<b>PASSHE</b>	- Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
<b>SAES</b>	- School Administrators' Efficacy Scale
<b>SGB</b>	- School Governing Body
<b>SMT</b>	- School Management Team

## CHAPTER 1

### OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

The study assessed the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals, as perceived by them, in the Free State Province of the Republic of South Africa. Leadership self-efficacy is a person's belief that he or she can exercise leadership successfully and set a direction for teamwork and build relations with followers to gain their commitment to changing their goals (Paglis & Green in Villanueva & Sanches, 2007:350). Leadership efficacy or self-efficacy is therefore crucial in school principals as they have to be confident in whatever they do.

Self-efficacy is a central concept in Bandura's Theory of Social Learning. Research on self-efficacy indicates that individuals with high self-efficacy set more challenging goals for themselves than do individuals with lower self-efficacy. Therefore, self-efficacy is related to motivation (Chiaburu, 2008). Research on self-efficacy has been conducted in many areas, including motivation and teaching efficacy, and now leadership. Pajares and Usher (2008:396) in their research on motivation found that self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for motivation, well-being and achievement because no matter what other factors may serve as motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one has the power to effect changes by one's actions.

Teacher efficacy is another area in which extensive research has been done. It relates to the teacher's personal belief in his or her ability to plan an instruction and accomplish instructional objectives. It is in effect the conviction the teacher has about his or her ability to teach the learners efficiently and effectively. The increasing body of research on teacher self-efficacy suggests that it may account for individual differences in teacher effectiveness. For example, teacher self-efficacy has been found to be consistently related to positive teaching behaviour and strong learner achievement. Learners learn more from teachers who have high self-efficacy. These teachers are more persistent at a task, take more risks, and are more likely to use innovative elements in their teaching (Gavora, 2010:2)

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, other areas of self-efficacy in which research was conducted are motivation and teacher efficacy. In this study, the focus is on the leadership self-efficacy of secondary school principals in the Free State Province.

Leadership efficacy is a specific form of efficacy associated with the level of confidence in the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with leading others. It can thus be clearly differentiated from confidence in the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with other social roles (Hannah; Avolio; Luthans and Harms, 2008:1).

As stated earlier, leadership efficacy is crucial in school principals as they deal with challenges and problems on a daily basis in the performance of their duties. School principals are subjected to increased demands from parents, learners, teachers, departmental officials, trade unions and the media. They face challenges related to managing parent relations, learners and staff, teaching and learning, as well as school finances. Principals are required to do piles of paperwork, which keep them out of the classroom; yet they are held accountable for what takes place in the classroom. In addition to long hours, multiple tasks and intense pressure, principals also have to deal with politics and bureaucracy, which affects their work. They are held accountable for policies without adequate resources or the time to do what is required of them (Thomson, Blackmore, Sachs & Tregenza, 2003).

Williams (2001:267) argues that the position of a school principal has many responsibilities. He states that the school principal occupies a most strategic position in the school and is responsible for all the activities that occur in and around the school buildings. Masitsa (2005:210) also identifies a number of responsibilities attached to the position of principal-ship, including good management and administration, formulation of a school vision and mission, recruitment and appointment of effective educators, and fostering good academic performance.

In addition to the responsibilities of school principals and the challenges that go with them, research has shown that self-efficacy also affects principals in the performance of their duties. This, in turn, affects the subordinates (teachers) in the performance of their duties. The self-efficacy beliefs of leaders have an impact on the attitude and

performance of their followers. The leader's perceived self-efficacy beliefs are related to subordinates' performance abilities, as well as the success at gaining the followers' commitment to the task (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:4).

It is the principal's leadership that sets the tone for the school, the climate for learning, the level of professionalism, the morale of teachers, and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become (Williams, 2001:267).

In line with this argument, Kelley, Thornton and Daugherty (2005:19) maintain that researchers have related the behaviour of the principal to the school climate. The school climate is the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, which affects their behavior, and is based on their perception of behaviour in schools. A positive climate can enhance staff performance, promote high morale and improve student achievement. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well-functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, the climate of a school can indeed be shaped by the actions and behaviour of the principal. This further emphasizes the importance of this study on the leadership efficacy of school principals as it affects their leadership practices within their schools, as well as the climate of their respective schools. Researchers have related principal behaviour to school climate. For example, behaviour such as effective communication, teacher advocacy, participatory decision-making and equitable evaluation have a positive effect on teachers.

In the same way, research done in business indicates that leaders are responsible for influencing their staff. In many cases, effective leaders possess both a concern for the task, while establishing an individual relationship with their employees. Since there is a relative direct connection between employees, their productivity, and the organisation's performance, it is essential for leaders to maintain a positive work environment to maximise and enhance their employees' efforts to reach organisational goals. The leader's behaviour explains nearly 25% of the reason why people feel productive, motivated, energized, effective and committed in their workplace (Holloway, 2012:10). Although this research was done in business, it is also relevant to education and schools.



## **1. 2 Background to the study**

Historically the promotion of a teacher to principal-ship was, and remains, primarily based on excellence and teaching. There is rarely any formal leadership training and school principals are appointed on the basis of their teaching record, rather than their potential to lead (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012:389). Other factors according to Puccio, Mance and Murdock (2010:1) which affect principals in performing their duties include the following: induction programmes that are inadequate, a lack of support structures to assist them, a lack of discipline, and their workload. All these factors according to the researcher may influence the school principals' leadership efficacy.

The background to this study is organised into three themes, namely, recruitment of principals, challenges experienced by principals, as well as principal efficacy.

### **1.2.1 Recruitment of school principals**

#### **1.2.1.1 International context**

The following are the factors concerning recruitment that affect principals internationally.

#### ***Classroom experience***

Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi (2011:31) state that school principals are appointed based on their successful record as teachers. Kaguri, Njati and Thiaine (2014:56) also maintain that school principals are appointed on the basis of their teaching experience, as well as their academic and professional qualifications.

Some of the challenges experienced by principals are the result of the manner in which they are identified, appointed and trained (Puccio, Mance and Murdock, 2010:1). The manner in which school principals are appointed and prepared for the position of principal is inadequate, as a result once in this position, the principal learns to manage and lead through experience or through trial and error (Kaguri, Njati & Thiaine, 2014: 56).

Considering the different views on teaching experience used as the requirement for appointing principals, my view is that teaching experience alone does not prepare a principal for a leadership position. Teaching experience cannot be disregarded completely as a requirement, but it should be noted that to be a principal, one needs more than teaching experience. In fact the school principal needs training and experience in leadership.

The other challenge experienced by school principals is having inadequate or no induction programme at all, which will be discussed in the following section.

### ***Induction programmes***

Induction is a process that individuals go through at the beginning of their careers. It is a multidimensional process that orients new principals to a school and school system, while strengthening their knowledge, skills and disposition to be an educational leader (Villani, 2005:18). (Puccio, Mance and Murdock, 2010:2) states that some induction programmes for principals are inadequate; while some principals have no induction at all. Thus principal-ship, in some cases, is a matter of being thrown in at the deep end.

The next section will discuss the lack of support structures for principals.

### ***Lack of support structures***

There is inadequate support for those wishing to be school principals. Research undertaken in Queensland, Australia indicates that school districts and state departments are said to have poor succession plans, complacent attitudes to recruitment, and ineffective or non-existent training and support schemes when it comes to the appointment of school principals (Thompson, Blackmore, Sachs & Tregenza, 2003).

Principals feel particularly lost in regards to the limited number of support structures available to assist them. There are a variety of factors which restrict principals from participating in professional support and development activities. These factors include

limited professional development funds, lack of time due to their responsibilities, and the distance from professional development sites (Puccio *et al.*, 2010:2). This, in my opinion, means that principals are not prepared adequately for the position they are expected to hold. This is why in my opinion some principals fail to perform their duties as school managers. Failure to perform their duties results in negative leadership efficacy.

The next section will focus on the challenges experienced by school principals worldwide.

## **1.2.2 Challenges experienced by school principals**

### **1.2.2.1 International context**

In the following section, the challenges which affect principals internationally are discussed.

#### ***The impact of political and social changes on education***

According to Bigham and Ray (2012:1), politics are present at every level of the school leader's involvement in the educational process, ranging in scope from local to national. Sexton (2012), is in agreement with Bigham and Ray when he states that public education is an extension of the political system, resulting in schools being reduced to vehicles for implementing political mandates. Sexton further argues that, education is inseparably intertwined with politics in the modern world. The arguments raised by different authors on the impact of political changes on education in my view clearly show that politics have a great influence on education.

The challenge facing the school leader in this regard is to acknowledge the reality that politics is part of their daily routine and to work with that process to ensure that educationally sound decisions are taken in matters concerning the learners (Bigham & Ray, 2012:1). In the following section, the focus is on lack of discipline as one of the challenges faced by school principals.

## ***Lack of discipline***

Lack of discipline is a major problem facing the effectiveness of work in the public and private sectors, and in the school system in particular. Where indiscipline reigns, discipline is lacking. Indiscipline at school includes disobedience, lack of respect for constituted authorities, violation of school rules and regulations, and other types of disorderly behavior (Chukwuka, 2013). Osher, Bear, Sprague and Doyle (2010:48) state that schools face a number of challenges related to disruptive and antisocial students. The behaviour of these students interferes with learning, diverts administrative time, and contributes to teacher burnout.

Research on lack of discipline or indiscipline indicates that school principals feel that they are spending more time on the problem of lack of discipline. The time spent reacting to ill-discipline must be balanced with time proactively spent on promoting positive behaviour (Chukwuka, 2013).

Excessive workload is another factor affecting the leadership efficacy of school principals. This factor is now discussed.

## ***Workload***

Research conducted in Colleges of Further Education in West Sussex, England, shows that school principals reported more stress due to work overload (Phillips, Sen and McNamee, 2007:369). According to an article published by an Irish newspaper, the *Irish Independent*, on 10 April 2014, school principals in Ireland are struggling with their workload. It further stated that the amount of work involved in running schools had become too much for one person to manage (*Irish Independent*, 2014:1).

The findings of a study conducted by Phillips, Sen and McNamee in England, Romney and also another study by Wiley and Hodgen in New Zealand point to the workload of school principals as a challenge. Romney (2012:1) in his study indicated that the role of the school principal continued to expand and to incorporate more job-related responsibilities. Although originally designed as a position for a lead teacher, the role of a principal has evolved into a complex and multifaceted job. They are concerned

with learner achievement; they also work long hours to support teachers, provide staff development, communicate with parents, deal with tightening budgets and supervise extra-curricular activities.

In similar vein, research conducted in New Zealand on the workload of school principals by Wiley and Hodgen, indicated that they work excessive hours. The majority of the principals who participated in the study, saw their work as management. Only a few of them indicated that they managed their workload, while the majority experienced high stress levels from their inability to focus on teaching and learning. All of this was caused by the multi-tasking nature of their job (Wiley and Hodgen, 2005: 29). These findings in my view point to the excessive workload of school principals.

The other challenge facing school principals is financial management.

### ***Financial Management***

Atieno and Simatwa (2012:103) state that school principals should be fully equipped with skills in financial management as they are expected to deal with the following aspects: budget preparation, managing funds, salaries for support staff, methods for sourcing funds, developing transparent financial systems, developing a cost-sharing policy and keeping financial records. The principals as financial managers in a school are responsible for budgeting, implementing budgetary plans, controlling the implementation processes, and reporting the results. In order to fulfil these responsibilities, principals, in my opinion must be competent in financial management and appreciate the element of accountability in educational planning. The lack of training of school principals in financial management has resulted in principals who cannot handle financial management in their schools.

According to Kaguri, Njathi and Thiaine (2014:56), training in financial management is not considered a prerequisite for appointment to the position of school principal, which tends to affect them in performing financial management. Thus, principals lack the necessary management skills, and specifically, financial management skills.

The challenges faced by school principals internationally are similar to those experienced by principals in South Africa. The next section focuses on the recruitment of school principals and the problems experienced by them in South Africa.

### **1.2.3 Recruitment**

#### **1.2.3.1 The South African context**

In this section, the recruitment of school principals in South Africa is discussed. The first challenge is the use of teaching or classroom experience as a requirement when appointing principals.

##### ***Classroom experience***

In many countries, including South Africa, school leaders begin their professional careers as teachers and progress to headship via a range of leadership roles, often described as middle management. This leads to a widespread view that a teaching qualification and teaching experience are the only requirements for school leadership. School principals are appointed on the basis of a success record as teachers, with the assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership; however, teaching abilities are not necessarily an indication that the person appointed will be a capable education manager (Bush, Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2011:31).

##### ***Lack of leadership preparation programmes***

In his study on the professional development of school principals, Mathibe argued that principals in South African schools are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership (Mathibe, 2007:523). His observations indicated that there was a lack of relevant leadership preparation programmes for principals in South Africa.

As a result of these observations, in 2007 the Department of Education decided to address the lack of leadership and management skills among school principals in South Africa. This was done by introducing a new qualification for aspiring principals

as part of its wider strategy to improve educational standards. The course, initially called an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE), was piloted in six provinces between 2007 and 2009. The pilot was open to serving principals, as well as deputy principals, and school management team members who aspired to become principals. The intention of the course was that it should be different from typical university programmes in that it was practice-based. The emphasis on practice resulted from the evidence that, although many school leaders hold a university qualification in management, their impact on school outcomes had been minimal. Their focus appeared to have been on achieving accreditation, rather than improving their schools. Hence, the introduction of the ACE programme. The aim of the ACE programme was to make a difference in the participants' management practice, leading to an improvement in schools (Bush *et al.*, 2011:32). It is important for the Department of Education to take note of the lack of leadership preparation programmes for school principals, and to intervene. This can be done by designing programmes which will address the training needs of school principals.

In addition to the lack of leadership preparation programmes, there is a lack of adequate induction programmes for school principals. This poses a challenge for newly appointed principals. This particular challenge will be discussed in the following section.

### ***Induction programmes***

It is important to note that successful recruitment does not end with the appointment of the school principal. Instead, school governors have a responsibility to induct the newly appointed principal, and this has to be done as soon as the appointment has been agreed on and no grievance has been lodged. Induction needs to be planned in advance so as to introduce and welcome the new principal or other education managers to their new positions (Dehaloo, 2008:32). According to Elsberry and Bishop (in Digwamaje and Assan, 2012:269), the absence of any structured induction programme results in most new school principals adopting a trial and error introductory approach and this often leads to increased anxiety in respect of the fulfilment of their obligations. Induction, if effectively implemented for principals, can go a long way in resolving the many challenges that confront school principals, including the common

practice of throwing principals in at the deep end, where they swim or sink. An effective induction programme produces a high return on investment by improving the conditions of service of beginner principals with the view to retaining them in the school system.

The induction of new principals in KwaZulu-Natal according to Dehaloo (2008:32) is generally conducted by the School Governing Body (SGB) Chairperson and the Superintendent of Education Management from the Local District office. If the candidate is an incumbent from the same school, the induction is more of a formality than an event. If the candidate is from outside, the induction process is more pronounced and includes a tour of the school and its facilities, meeting staff members, and familiarizing him or herself with the vision and mission and the ethos of the school. The researcher reported on the induction of school principals in KwaZulu-Natal because there were no research reports found by the researcher on induction of school principals in the Free State Province. This the gap the researcher saw.

The following section focuses on the challenges experienced by school principals in South Africa.

## **1.2.4 Challenges experienced by school principals**

### **1.2.4.1 The South African context**

#### ***The impact of political and social changes on education***

The dramatic changes in South Africa's educational landscape since 1994 have produced major challenges and demands for school leaders and managers. This means that leadership deals with areas such as supervision of the curriculum, improving the instructional programme of the school, working with staff to identify a vision and mission of the school, and building a close relationship with the community. Management, on the other hand, includes factors such as supervising the budget, maintaining the school buildings and grounds, and complying with educational policies and acts (Pretorius in Botha, 2004).



Thurlow (in Moloi, 2007:466) states that the shift to a democratic South Africa following decades of apartheid was accompanied by a move to school-based management. New conditions and expectations in education can create new challenges to and perspectives on the role of school principals. Masitsa (in Engelbrecht, 2009) remarks that the political and social changes which have taken place in South Africa have had a significant impact on schools, in particular, and on education, in general. The changing environment may alter a principal's task in many ways, which in turn demands new skills which are needed for the job if principals are to keep pace with ongoing developments. Unless principals are familiar with the dynamics of change, they will not survive for long. To keep up, principals need skills that will enable them to be flexible and adaptable so that they are able to accommodate legally-instituted changes, as well as change in general (Schmieder & Cains in Engelbrecht, 2009).

The next section focuses on lack of discipline, as one of the challenges experienced by school principals.

### ***Lack of discipline***

School discipline was, and continues to be, a problem in South Africa. Providing a safe and secure learning environment has always been the hallmark of a successful school principal and a successful school (Martin & MacNeil, 2007). According to Mdluli (in Engelbrecht, 2009), the lack of discipline at secondary schools is an important issue. Maphosa and Shumba (2010), in their study which was triggered by escalating cases of learner indiscipline, stated that indiscipline in schools had reached a point where it raised safety and security concerns. Moyo, Khewu and Bayaga (2014:4) agree that a lack of discipline remains a serious challenge for education leaders and practitioners in South Africa. They state that it is reflected in behaviour such as drug abuse, assault, theft, rape and murder. These authors further indicate that because of a lack of discipline in schools, teaching and learning are affected, and learners' academic performance is deteriorating drastically.

When the academic performance of the learners deteriorates that reflects badly at the school, its teachers, the school management team, which includes the school principal. This in turn has a negative effect on the school principal, which will affect

his or her leadership efficacy negatively. Next we look into the workload of principals as a challenge affecting how they lead schools.

### ***Workload***

Another challenge faced by school principals is the workload that they have to deal with in their role as principals. The role of the principal in the traditional school model was viewed as that of a manager and an administrator. Traditionally, principals had more managerial and administrative tasks and less teaching duties, but now the principal's role in the new educational dispensation represents a balance in instructional leadership and management (Pretorius in Botha, 2004).

Their workload is becoming increasingly unmanageable, and many principals lack the time for and an understanding of their leadership task (Caldwell, Edwards & Budhal in Engelbrecht, 2009). According to Van Huysteen and Steyn (in Engelbrecht, 2009), this also seems to be the case among South African secondary school principals. In my view, the workload is a challenge for some school principals. It is therefore important for them to maintain a balance between their administrative and managerial duties and their teaching duties.

Financial management is another challenge experienced by school principals in performing their duties. This factor will be discussed now.

### ***Financial Management***

Moloi (2007:468) states that financial management is one of the most important responsibilities facing school principals since the implementation of the South African Schools Act 1996. A large number of principals consistently demonstrate anxiety about carrying out this function and their need for additional training to do this effectively. The principals, having been trained as educators, lack the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out the task of financial management. As a result they are placed under tremendous pressure to work out practical viable solutions to complex financial problems. Education systems need money to function effectively, thus financial school management has become the core of educational change. Every

school manager must have some knowledge of financial principles and the ability to implement these in a school (Bischoff & Mestry, 2009:3).

Support structures, especially for beginner school principals, are very important in equipping them with the skills in financial management to perform their duties effectively. This aspect will be discussed in the next section.

### **1.2.5 The necessity of support structures**

All the challenges discussed above compound the task of the school principal and place certain demands on him or her. They need support as this will assist them in the performance of their duties.

Professional support is very important for principals, especially for newly appointed principals. The professional support structures that principals find valuable are mentoring relationships, peer support and professional associations. Ways of improving professional support include funding and formalizing mentoring relationships and offering this support. While there is a demand for competent principals, there should also be support structures in place to assist principals in their new demanding position. This will lead to school leaders who have high levels of self-efficacy and leadership efficacy (Schmieder & Cains in Engelbrecht, 2009).

The challenges faced by school principals in performing their duties have been discussed. One of the solutions to these challenges according to the researcher will be to ensure that principals receive training and are prepared for their position. Leadership preparation programmes are important. The following section will focus on leadership preparation programmes for school principals.

#### **1.2.5.1 Leadership preparation programmes for principals: an international perspective**

School principals and other education managers need to be thoroughly prepared for their roles. Worldwide, recognition of the need for specific preparation for aspiring and practicing school leaders in order to improve school effectiveness has been slow to

emerge (Dehaloo, 2008:6). According to Scott (2010:7) by 1980, no country had a clear system of national requirements, agreed upon frameworks of knowledge, and standards of preparation for school leaders. In many countries, training was not a requirement for the appointment to principal-ship and it was assumed that good teachers could become effective principals without specific preparation. Today, however, interest in leadership development and learning programmes has become an international phenomenon and there is much debate on leadership development philosophies and programmes. Improving the recruitment, training, evaluation and ongoing development of principals are considered a highly cost-effective approach to successful school improvement. In many countries, school principals are required to have a relevant leadership qualification or license prior to appointment, and the training or development of education leaders has become of paramount importance. In England, for example, the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), a government-funded body, has the responsibility for the professional development of school leaders. From April 2009, it became mandatory for all aspiring heads of schools in England to complete the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) prior to appointment. Training centres and providers were established in Training and Development Centres in England and Wales where training is provided only by accredited trainers of the NPQH (Scott:, 2010:7)

In the United States, it is mandatory for school principals to attain an educational Master's degree and licenses. However, critics in the US, including school principals themselves have raised numerous concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the leadership preparation provided by university-based programmes and elsewhere. They say that it is disconnected from real-world complexities, that the knowledge is weak and outdated, that curricula often fail to provide grounding in effective teaching and learning, that mentorship and internship often lack rigour, and as a result, too many graduates will eventually be certified, but not truly qualified to effectively lead school-wide change (Scott, 2010: 8).

Ng and Szeto conducted research in Hong Kong and the findings of their study indicate that before 2000, the principals in this country were required to attend a basic course with regard to administrative matters when they were appointed. They also indicate that training programmes for aspirant or beginner and serving principals were

organised on an ad hoc basis by school organizations or the Education Department. It is said that in 1999, the Education Department set up a Task Group to explore the possibility of providing training and development for school leaders. The Task Group proposed a framework for principal leadership preparation and development, some interest groups demonstrated reservations about the recommendations. In 2002, a more coherent framework for principal development was outlined. In this framework, different types of requirements for aspiring principals, newly appointed principals and serving principals were outlined. This led to the introduction of a two-year programme to provide newly appointed school principals with support in adapting to their new role. In 2004, aspirant principals were required to obtain a Certificate for Principal-ship, two years before assuming the role of principal (Ng and Szeto 2016:1)

The leadership preparation programs from the international perspective were discussed. The following discussion is on leadership preparation programmes for school principals in South Africa.

#### **1.2.5.2 Leadership preparation programmes for school principals: the South African context**

Unlike countries such as the United Kingdom, Hong Kong or the US, educators in South Africa, can be appointed to the office of principal-ship irrespective of the fact whether they have a school management or leadership qualification. Such openness to appointment to the highest office in a school does not only defeat the view of getting the right person for the job, but it also places school administration, management, leadership and governance in the hands of technically unqualified personnel. Attempts have been made to provide skills and professional development programmes for principals in South African schools. For example, an advisory body consisting of former principals, labour union representatives and members of the Education Department was established to give direction to the programme for developing capacity in school management and leadership (Mathibe, 2007:529).

Dehaloo maintains that in South Africa, as in the whole of Africa, there exists no formal requirement that expects principals and other education managers to be trained prior to being appointed into managerial positions (Dehaloo, 2008:6). A focus on the

professional development of education leaders and managers has been slow to emerge in South Africa compared to some countries. It was only in 2003 that the National Department of Education released a draft policy framework, proposing the professionalisation of education managers and leaders by introducing a national principal-ship for aspiring principals (Scott, 2010: 13).

Added to the list of problems associated with the principal's preparation programme is their leadership efficacy.

### **1.2.6 School principal efficacy**

A principal's sense of efficacy is a judgement of his or her capabilities to structure a particular course of action in order to produce the desired outcomes in the school he or she leads. It is the principal's self-perceived capability to perform the cognitive and behavioural function necessary to regulate group processes in relation to goal achievement (Bandura in Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:3).

A principal's self-efficacy beliefs have a significant impact on his or her level of aspiration and goal setting, effort, adaptability and persistence (Bandura, Gist & Mitchell in Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:4). Bandura (in Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007) explained that when faced with obstacles, setbacks and failures, those who doubt their capabilities slacken their efforts, give up, or settle for mediocre solutions. Those who have a strong belief in their capabilities re-double their efforts to master the challenge. Rice (2010:3) agrees that the principal's sense of effectiveness at the various kinds of tasks makes them effective.

Principals with a strong sense of efficacy have been found to be persistent in pursuing their goals, but are also more flexible and more willing to adapt their strategies based on contextual conditions. They are dedicated in their efforts to achieve their goals, but they do not persist in unsuccessful strategies. Confronted with problems, principals with a high sense of efficacy do not interpret their inability to solve the problems immediately as failure. They regulate their personal expectations to correspond to conditions, typically remain confident and calm, and keep their sense of humour, even in difficult situations. Principals with higher self-efficacy are more likely to use

internally-based personal power, such as expert, informational and referent power, when carrying out their roles (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:5). When the perception of self-efficacy is thus at a higher level, higher goals are established, and the commitment to achieve the goals is stronger (Moak, 2010:28).

In contrast, school principals with a low sense of self-efficacy have been found to perceive the inability to control the environment as failure. They tend to be less likely to identify appropriate strategies or modify unsuccessful ones. When confronted with failure, they rigidly persist in their original course of action. When challenged, they are likely to blame others. Low self-efficacy principals are unable to see opportunities, to adapt, or to develop support. They demonstrate anxiety, stress and frustration, and are quicker to call themselves a failure. Those with a low sense of self-efficacy are more likely to rely on external and institutional bases of power, such as coercive, positional and reward power (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:5). Thus, people who do not believe in their power to produce results will not exert as much effort to achieve their goals or reach their purpose (Moak, 2010:28).

School principal efficacy is also discussed in detail in the extension of the literature review in Chapter 3.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

School principals are appointed without being properly trained for the roles they are expected to fulfil and the tasks they are expected to perform. This situation can render them ineffective as leaders in performing their leadership tasks. Feelings of inadequacy in one or more aspects of their leadership roles might affect their self-efficacy in leadership. Their leadership self-efficacy could be low, moderate or high, depending on their sources of self-efficacy. Sources of self-efficacy have been cited in the literature as mastery learning, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and physiological states. Mastery learning, which means performing a task successfully, strengthens a person's sense of efficacy (Cherry, 2010:3), and is related to high self-efficacy. Verbal persuasion means people can be persuaded to believe that they have the skills and capabilities to succeed (Bandura, 2006:2). Vicarious experience means seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises the observer's



belief that they too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities to succeed (Cherry, 2010:3), and physiological states refer to efficacy information gained from physiological and emotive reactions to a particular task (Labone, 2004:343). Research has shown that individuals with high self-efficacy set more challenging goals for themselves than do individuals with lower self-efficacy Bandura (in Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:574).

Referring to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, there is interaction between the environment one finds oneself in, the individual, and the individual's behaviour (Pajares, 2002:1). The environment in this study is the school and it includes the school factors inside and outside of the school, and the personal factors include qualifications, gender and experience. All these factors interact and determine the behaviour of an individual. In this case, the individual is the school principal with his personality and the environment is the school, and all these will interact and determine the behaviour of the principal in carrying out his duties.

Therefore, this study was undertaken to assess the level of leadership efficacy of school principals in eight dimensions of their leadership roles, as well as the contextual and personal factors that affect their leadership efficacy, and consequently, their leadership practices.

## **1.4 Research aim and objectives**

### **1.4.1 Research aim**

The aim of the study is to assess the leadership efficacy of school principals in different dimensions of their leadership roles, and to examine the factors (personal and contextual) which affect their leadership efficacy in secondary schools in the Free State Province.



### **1.4.2 Research objectives**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals in the Free State Province in different dimensions of their leadership roles.
2. To examine the factors (contextual and personal) which affect the school principal's leadership efficacy.
3. To determine the extent to which the school principal's leadership efficacy affects the performance of his or her duties.
4. To establish if there are differences in the leadership efficacy of the school principals as differentiated by biographical factors such as qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school.
5. To examine the effect of the leadership efficacy of the school principals on the overall school climate.

### **1.5 Research questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of leadership efficacy of secondary school principals in the different dimensions of their leadership roles in the Free State Province?
2. To what extent do personal and contextual factors affect the leadership efficacy of the school principals?
3. Are there differences in the leadership efficacy of the school principals in performing their tasks as differentiated by biographical factors, such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school?
4. What other contextual variables affect the leadership practices of the school principals?
5. In what way is the overall climate of the school affected by the school principal's leadership efficacy?

## 1.6 Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the level of efficacy of the school principals in the different dimensions of leadership.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of leadership efficacy of the school principals in the Free State Province as differentiated by biographical factors such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school.
3. Personal and contextual factors can negatively affect the leadership efficacy of school principals.
4. There is a direct relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principals and their leadership practices.
5. There is a direct relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principals and the overall school climate.

## 1.7 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study originates from Bandura's Theory of Social Learning. The Social Learning Theory emphasises the importance of modelling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. Bandura states that learning would be exceedingly laborious if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them on what they have to do. Fortunately, most human actions are learned observationally through modelling (Bandura, 1977). Bandura's Theory is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The Social Cognitive Theory is rooted in a view of human agency in which individuals are agents proactively engaged in their own development, and that they can make things happen through their actions. Key to this sense of agency is the fact that among other personal factors, individuals possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings and actions that what people think, believe and feel affects how they behave. Bandura proposed a view of human functioning that emphasized the role of self-referent beliefs. In this socio-cognitive perspective, individuals are viewed as proactive and self-regulating, rather than reactive and controlled by biological forces. Also in this view, individuals are

understood to possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings and actions. Overall, Bandura painted a portrait of human behaviour and motivation in which the beliefs that people have about their capabilities are critical elements. In fact, according to Bandura, how people behave can often be better predicted by their beliefs than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing, for these self-perceptions help determine what individuals do with the knowledge and skills they have (Pajares, 2002:1).

According to Bandura (in Gist, 2010), “Self-efficacy, a key component in Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, refers to one’s belief in one’s capability to perform a specific task”. Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with people’s beliefs in their capability to produce given attainments (Bandura, 2006:307). It is a judgement of the capability to execute given types of performances. Perceived self-efficacy plays a key role in human functioning because it affects behaviorur not only directly, but by its impact on other determinants such as goals and aspirations, outcome expectations and perceptions of impediments and opportunities in the social environment. Efficacy beliefs influence whether people choose to pursue the challenges and goals they set for themselves and their commitment to them, how much effort they expend in the given endeavours, the outcomes they expect their efforts to produce, how long they persevere in the face of obstacles, their resilience to adversity, the quality of their emotional life and how much stress and depression they experience in coping with taxing environmental demands, and the life choices they make and the accomplishments they realise (Bandura, 2006:309).

Self-efficacy arises from the gradual acquisition of complex cognitive, social, linguistic and/or physical skills through experience. Individuals appear to weigh, integrate and evaluate information about their capabilities. They then regulate their choices and efforts accordingly (Gist, 2010). The concept of self-efficacy has been used in education. Extensive research has been done into teaching efficacy and on learning efficacy. Studies have been conducted on how teachers and learners perceive a principal’s leadership abilities, but there are very few studies where leaders evaluate themselves. Thus, the focus of this study was on how school principals in the five districts of the Free State Province perceive themselves in regards to the execution of their duties as school leaders. In assessing the leadership efficacy of school principals

it is necessary to explain how leadership self-efficacy develops by focusing on the sources of self-efficacy.

## **1.8 The sources of self-efficacy**

According to Bandura (in Cherry, 2010:2), self-efficacy beliefs begin to form in early childhood as children deal with a wide variety of experiences, tasks and situations. However, the growth of self-efficacy does not end during youth but continues to evolve throughout life as people acquire new skills, experiences and understanding.

Bandura (in Sewell & St George, 2009:60) states that beliefs concerning self-efficacy can be developed via four sources. The sources of self-efficacy are mastery experiences, social modeling or vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and psychological responses.

### **1.8.1 Mastery experiences**

The most effective way to create a strong sense of efficacy is through mastery experiences (Bandura in Sewell & St George, 2009:60). Performing a task successfully strengthens our sense of efficacy (Cherry, 2010:3). However, failing to adequately deal with a task or challenge can undermine and weaken our self-efficacy.

### **1.8.2 Social modeling or vicarious experiences**

Belief in one's own capability to master similar tasks is strengthened by seeing others who are similar or held in high regard succeed by persevering. Conversely, observing others fail despite persistent effort tends to lower one's judgement of efficacy (Sewell & St George, 2009:60). Cherry also indicates that witnessing other people successfully completing a task is another important source of efficacy (Cherry, 2010:2).

### **1.8.3 Social persuasion**

Social persuasion, although commonly used, is one of the least effective means of raising self-efficacy as unrealistic boosts in efficacy via persuasion are quickly deflated by failure (Sewell and St George (2009:60). Verbal encouragement from others helps people overcome self-doubt and instead focus on giving their best efforts to the task at hand (Cherry, 2010:3).

### **1.8.4 Physiological and affective state**

Our own responses and emotional reactions to a situation also play an important role in self-efficacy. Moods, emotional states, physical reactions and stress levels can all impact how a person feels about their personal abilities in a particular situation. A person who becomes extremely nervous before speaking in public may develop a weak sense of self-efficacy in these situations. By learning how to minimize stress levels and elevate mood when facing difficult or challenging tasks can improve a person's sense of efficacy (Cherry, 2010:3).

The sources of self-efficacy will also be discussed in detail in the literature review in Chapter 3.

The next section will discuss leadership.

## **1.9 Leadership and leadership efficacy**

### **1.9.1 Leadership**

Mestry and Grobler (in Engelbrecht, 2009:5) define leadership as the ability to get others involved in solving problems, the ability to recognise when a group requires direction and to effectively interact with the group to guide them to accomplish a task. Leadership is the exercise of influence by one member of a group or organisation over other members to help the group or organisation achieve its goals (George & Jones, 2002:390). Balasubramanyam (2010:1) is in agreement with George and Jones when he states: "Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish

an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent”.

Leadership is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Leadership efficacy will be discussed in the next section.

### **1.9.2 Leadership efficacy**

Leadership self-efficacy is a person’s belief that he or she can exercise leadership successfully and set a direction for teamwork and build relations with followers to gain their commitment to changing the goals (Paglis & Green in Villanueva & Sanches, 2007:350).

In research outside the educational field Imants and Brabander stresses the relationship between the cognitive characteristics of the leader and the effectiveness of the organization. They presented empirical evidence of the contribution of managers’ self-efficacy to effective decision-making in industrial settings. These researchers found that perceived self-efficacy was positively related to the effective use of analytic strategies for discovering optimal managerial rules. Both sense of efficacy and the use of analytic strategies contributed to managerial success in raising organisational performance (Imants & Brabander, 1996:181-182). These findings suggest that a principal’s perceived self-efficacy might be an important factor in school effectiveness and school improvement. Leadership efficacy is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The next section focuses on school principal efficacy.

### **1.9.3 The effect of the leadership efficacy of principals on the school climate**

The well-being of an employee is an important factor in determining the achievement of goals. The school climate is the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, that is, the educators and the learners. It affects their behaviour and is based on their collective perception of the school. A positive school climate can enhance staff performance and promote higher morale, which will then contribute positively to the well-being of educators. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well-functioning school, a high degree of

academic achievement is difficult, if not impossible (Kelley, Thornton & Daugherty, 2005:19).

Principals have a critical role to play in schools. Their behaviours are believed to be central to the creation and facilitation of an effective teaching and learning environment within a school (Smith, Guarino & Olin, 2010:3). According to Kelley *et al.* (2005:19), researchers have related a principal's behaviour to the school climate. Indeed, the climate of a school can be shaped by the actions and behaviour of a principal. The principal has the power, authority and position to impact the climate of the school.

The next section deals with the research methodology used in this study.

### **1.10. Research methodology**

This section explains the research design, the research instruments used to collect the data, and the research sampling techniques used in the study.

#### **1.10.1 Research design**

The research approach used in this study is the mixed methods approach. As a method it focuses on collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach on its own (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011:435).

This approach involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. It integrates the two forms of data and uses distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2004:4). The research design used in this study is explained in detail in Chapter 4.

### **1.10.2 Research instruments**

A questionnaire was used as the main data gathering instrument in this study and was followed by semi-structured interviews.

### **1.10.3 Research sample and sampling procedure**

This study involved 84 secondary school principals in the Free State Province. One hundred (100) questionnaires were administered to the secondary school principals in the Province and the response rate was 84, thus 84 questionnaires were received from the principals. Using cluster sampling the researcher selected 100 schools and distributed questionnaires to the principals. Some of the questionnaires were personally delivered by the researcher to the school principals, while some were sent via e-mail and collected from the principals by the researcher in the Xhariep, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyane and Motheo Districts. In the Fezile Dabi District the questionnaires were sent to the school principals via e-mail by the researcher and former Central University of Technology, Free State students, now practising teachers in the Fezile Dabi district, were requested by the researcher to collect the questionnaires from the school principals. The completed questionnaires were received from the former students by the researcher. In the Xhariep and the Thabo Mofutsanyane Districts, the questionnaires were completed by the school principals in meetings attended by them. These were delivered personally to the meetings by the researcher and were collected immediately after completion by the school principals.

### **1.11 Significance of the study**

The researcher in the recommendations highlights some of the things which could be done to develop a positive leadership efficacy of school principals in the Free State Province. The results of this study will make the authorities in the Free State Department of Education aware of the level of leadership efficacy of school principals in the Free State Province. This study will also make the Department of Education aware of the school, personal, contextual and external challenges experienced by secondary school principals and the effect of these challenges on their leadership efficacy, their leadership practices, and eventually, the school climate. This will



invariably assist the Departmental officials to find ways of assisting school principals to improve the performance of their duties.

### **1.12 Scope of the study**

The study was confined to the principals of the secondary schools situated in the Free State Province of South Africa.

### **1.13 Definition of concepts**

#### **Leadership**

Mestry and Grobler (in Engelbrecht 2009:5) define leadership as the ability to get others involved in solving problems, the ability to recognise when a group requires direction, and to effectively interact with the group to guide them to accomplish a task.

According to Balasubramanyam (2010), “Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent”.

#### **Self-efficacy**

According to Bandura (in Gist, 2010), “self-efficacy, a key component in Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, refers to one’s belief in one’s capability to perform a specific task”.

#### **Perceived self-efficacy**

Perceived self-efficacy refers to one’s capability to organise and execute the course of action required to manage prospective situations (Fincher, 2008:50).

## **Leadership efficacy**

Leadership self-efficacy is a person's belief that he or she can exercise headship successfully and set a direction for teamwork and build relations with followers to gain their commitment to changing the goals (Paglis & Green in Villanueva & Sanches, 2007:350).

## **School principal self-efficacy**

A principal's sense of efficacy is a judgement of his or her capabilities to structure a particular course of action in order to produce the desired outcomes in the school he or she leads. It is the principal's self-perceived capability to perform the cognitive and behavioural function necessary to regulate group processes in relation to goal achievement (Bandura in Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007).

## **Leadership practices**

Leadership practices can be defined as the overall competence of a manager or supervisor to achieve superior performance results through others. In other words, effective leaders achieve superior results through others (Owen, Culbertson & Mink, 2011:3).

## **School climate**

Stover (in Khademfar & Idris, 2012) defines school climate as how learners and teachers feel about their school. Stover further asserts that school climate is one of the clearest predictors of the educational success of a school.

### **1.14 Methodological limitations of the study**

Problems experienced by school principals are sometimes context-specific. The study was conducted in the Free State Province and the results of this study can be generalised to the province only.

## **1.15. Chapter outline**

The chapter outline is as follows:

### **Chapter 1**

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study.

### **Chapter 2**

This chapter presents a review of theoretical literature leadership and managerial roles of school principals

### **Chapter 3**

Chapter 3 provides a review of theoretical literature on leadership efficacy.

### **Chapter 4**

In Chapter 4, the researcher offers an exposition of the methodology applied in this study.

### **Chapter 5**

Chapter 5 presents the quantitative results of the study.

### **Chapter 6**

In Chapter 6, the qualitative results of the study are presented.

### **Chapter 7**

The final chapter provides a summary of the results, conclusions, recommendations of the study and the contribution to new knowledge.

## **1.1.6 Conclusion**

The main aim of this chapter was to provide an overview of the study and an introduction to the study. This chapter also provided information on the background of the study, the aim of the study, the objectives of the study, the statement of the

problem, the hypothesis, the research questions, the theoretical rationale, the definitions of terms used in the study, the research design used and the limitations of the study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGERIAL ROLES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

##### **2.1 Introduction**

The school principals have to perform a number of roles including providing leadership, facilitating meaningful change, providing and maintaining material and physical resources, managing staff, managing the curriculum and instruction, monitoring the progress of learners, and promoting a positive school climate (Mazibuko, 2007). Mazibuko further states that each and every role here involves aspects of planning, organising and co-ordinating. This is not an exhaustive list of the roles of school principals, but it does give an idea of the complex nature of the task of a school principal. This also implies that a school principal has to be a good manager as well as an effective leader. Since the study assesses the leadership efficacy of school principals, it is necessary to look in-depth into the two different but interrelated concepts of leadership and management.

This chapter provides a literature review on leadership theories, leadership styles, the problems in appointing school principals internationally and in South Africa, the preparation programmes for principals, the challenges faced by principals, and the roles of principals as school leaders and managers.

##### **2.2 Leadership theories**

Since theories guide practice, it is important to look into some of the leadership theories that are discussed in literature and which appear to influence the leadership practices of school principals.

Theories of leadership are also referred to as the different views of leadership, and there are as many different views of leadership as there are characteristics that distinguish leaders from non-leaders (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Olohube, 2015:1).

Early leadership theories focused on what qualities distinguished between leaders and followers, while subsequent theories looked at other variables such as situational factors and skill levels (Van Wagner, 2008:1). Leadership theories have evolved to the point where they are the basis for models that accurately describe the activities of leaders with good correlation to their success in some situations. From the early trait theories to the modern theories of transformational leadership, each attempts to describe the behaviour of successful leaders (Miles, 2007:2).

In the following section, the first theories of leadership, that is, the traits theory, the behavioural theory, and the contingency theory are discussed.

### **2.2.1 The trait theory**

The first theory of learning which will be discussed is the traits theory.

The traits theory postulates that personal characteristics determine an individual's potential for leadership roles. According to this theory, leadership is something intrinsic to the individual (France, 2008:7). Van Wagner (2008) states that the traits theory assumes that people inherit certain qualities and traits that make them better suited to leadership. The following are traits or characteristics that have been identified in effective leaders: drive, leadership motivation, self-confidence, integrity, honesty, cognitive ability and knowledge of the business (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991:48). The trait theory often identifies particular personality or behavioural characteristics shared by leaders. But, if particular traits are key features of leadership, how do we explain people who possess these features and qualities but are not good leaders (Van Wagner 2008:1). In all, the trait theory, like any other theory has got its advantages and weaknesses.

Following the traits theory is the behavioural theory. This theory will now be discussed.

### **2.2.2 The behavioural theory**

The behavioural theory of leadership is based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born. Rooted in behaviourism, this theory focuses on the actions of leaders,

not mental qualities or internal state. According to this theory, people can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation (Van Wagner, 2008:1). The behavioural theory advances the idea that an effective leader is discernible by his or her actions (France, 2008:8).

The next theory of learning which will be discussed is the contingency or the situational theory.

### **2.2.3 The contingency or situational theory**

This theory was developed in the 1960s by Fred Fiedler. The term contingency indicate that, this model is based on the idea that rather than having a single leadership style for all circumstances, the best approach is to be able to vary the leadership that is provided based on the group and task at hand. Fiedler argued that effectiveness in leadership depends on two interacting factors, that means the leadership style and the degree to which the situation gives the leaders control and influence. Three important things in the contingency theory are the relationship between the leaders and the followers, the structure of the task and the position of power (Team FME, 2015:17). These three things according to the researcher determine the leader's control and influence.

The term situation contingency or situational theory indicates that leaders should vary their approach based on the people they are leading, and the circumstances that surround the task at hand. This theory depends on a variety of circumstances. This according to the researcher means leaders should be able to adapt their leadership style when their circumstance require them to do so. Hersey and Blanchard further state that it is only when a leader is able to change their approach to the maturity and talent of those that make up the team will the overall performance be up to par (E-books.com, 2015:37).

The contingency or situational theory according to France (2008:8), is focused on situational variables. The leader modifies his or her leadership according to the context. The contingency theory is more concerned with the context of applied leadership, which is left unaccounted for in the traits and the behavioural theories. In

the situational theory, the focus is on situational variables: the leader modifies his or her leadership style according to his or her own personal characteristics and the context, that is, the current situation. Van Wagner shares the same sentiments as France when he states that this theory proposes that leaders choose the best course of action, based upon situational variables. Different styles of leadership may be more appropriate for certain types of decision-making. According to this theory, no leadership style works well in all situations. Success depends upon a number of variables, including the leadership style, the qualities of the followers, and the different aspects of the situation (Van Wagner, 2008:1).

Next, we focus on the path-goal theory.

#### **2.2.4 The Path-goal theory**

The supporters of the path-goal theory state that a leader is placed when there's a goal or an objective to be achieved. They further explain that there is a path that leads to the achievement of these goals. The responsibilities of leaders according to this theory is to clear the path, remove obstacles and offer reward to his or her followers. This theory identifies four kinds of leader behaviour, that is, the directive leader behaviour, supportive leadership behaviour, participative leadership behaviour and the achievement-oriented behaviour (e-Books.com, 2015:37-38).

According to Northouse (2012:143) the path goal theory provides a set of assumptions about how various leadership styles interact with characteristics of subordinates. He further states that in practice, this theory provides direction about how leaders can help subordinates to accomplish their work in a satisfactory manner.

### **2.3 Leadership styles**

Leadership styles are the approaches used to motivate followers (Amanchukwu, Stanley and Ololube, 2015:9). There are many different leadership styles proposed by various authors that can be exhibited in many different fields. These include the following styles: autocratic, democratic, transformational, transactional, situational and instructional.



### **2.3.1 The autocratic leadership style**

This is an extreme form of transactional leadership, where leaders have complete power over staff. Staff and the team members have little opportunity to make suggestions, even if these are in the best interest of the team or organisation (Amanchukwu, Stanley and Ololube, 2015:10). The autocratic leadership style portrays the manager as an authoritative leader. Leaders who use this leadership style demand compliance with orders without explaining the reason behind them. They use threats and punishment to instil fear in their employees, they set the goals for the organisation, and their decisions are accepted without questioning. These managers or leaders do not have confidence in their subordinates. As a result they are monitored all the time and the managers focus on the followers' mistakes rather than what they do well. Employee-management conversation is limited and it is characterised by fear and mistrust. These managers rarely praise; rather they often criticize, which leads to followers losing confidence in them. The followers also become less committed to their work. This top-down coercive method of running a school would for example lead to a lack of commitment on the part of the teachers (Oyetunji, 2006:34). Autocratic leaders are classic "do as I say" types (Germano, 2010:1).

Typically, autocratic leaders are inexperienced with the leadership role thrust upon them in the form of a new position or assignment that involves people management. Autocratic leaders can damage an organisation irreparably as they force their followers to execute strategies and services in a narrow way based upon a subjective idea of what success looks like. There is no shared vision and little motivation beyond coercion. Commitment, creativity and innovation are typically eliminated by autocratic leadership (Germano, 2010:1).

Autocratic principals, personal task and direction play an important role in a school. The principal dictates his or her terms to both the educators and learners. The active participation of educators is restricted to teaching and testing. Such principals may be regarded as the "boss of bosses and master of masters" by teachers at their schools. They rely on the power of their position and place a high value on completing tasks, while neglecting the needs of teachers. They tell the teachers what to do and rarely

involve them in decision making. This leadership style may however have numerous advantages in the school context. Teachers, for example, may experience a feeling of safety in a school situation and the principal's fixed rules and procedures provide both the teachers and learners with certainty about what is expected of them. However, this type of leadership also has disadvantages. For example, it suppresses creative thinking amongst the educators and because there is no cooperation between the principal and the educators, the school climate is characterised by competition, reluctance and lack of order. Educators may develop a negative attitude towards the principal's leadership. Since this leadership style leads to a school climate which is characterised by negativity among the educators and to indiscipline, it is probably best to avoid it. The autocratic leadership style is reminiscent of the previous education system in South Africa, and hence, its consequent collapse (Beeka, 2008:79).

### **2.3.2 The democratic leadership style**

The democratic leadership style is based on the principles of democracy. Democracy is defined as a theory of government which, in its purest form, holds that the state should be controlled by all the people, each sharing equally in the privileges, duties and responsibilities, and each participating in person (Beeka, 2008:81).

The democratic leadership style is an open and collegial style of running a team. Ideas move freely amongst the group and are discussed openly. Everyone is given a seat at the table, and discussion is encouraged. Democratic leadership, also known as the participative leadership style, is a type of leadership in which members of the group take a more participative role in the decision-making process. Researchers have found that this leadership style is usually one of the most effective and leads to higher productivity, better contributions from group members, and increased group morale (Ray & Ray, 2012:3). According to Okoji (2015:134) the democratic style of leaders emphasises group and leader participation in the making of policies. Decisions about organisational matters are arrived at after consultation and communication with various people in the organisation.

The democratic leader has complete confidence and trust in his or her employees. The employees are involved in the management of the organisation, and they are

highly motivated by their involvement in the setting of goals, improving methods, and appraising progress towards these goals. There is a good employee-management relationship and the workers see themselves as part of the organisation, by exhibiting a high degree of responsibility and commitment. The employees work together as a team. This is because the manager creates a situation where everybody participates fully in the activities of the organisation (Oyetunji, 2006:34). This means that a principal who adopts a democratic leadership style would allow the school to be controlled by all the stakeholders, each sharing equally in the privileges, duties and responsibilities. The most important stakeholders in the school are the school management team and the educators, followed by the members of the School Governing Body, who are representatives of the parent. The active participation in person of each of these stakeholders is imperative for the principal to lead and manage the school as a democratic leader (Beeka, 2008:81).

The communication in democratic leadership flows to and from the management structures, and also among colleagues. The democratic leadership style is the one most likely to affect the school's climate positively (Oyetunji, 2006:34).

The following leadership style is the transformational leadership style.

### **2.3.3 The transformational leadership style**

Transformational leadership implies the transformation of a subordinate. It refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interest through idealised influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualised consideration. It elevates the follower's level of maturity and ideals, as well as his or her concerns for achievement, self-actualisation and the well-being of others, the organisation and society (France, 2008:16).

Transformational leaders aim at transforming their subordinates. The term transform means major change in the form, nature, function and/or potential of some phenomenon. Transformational leaders have the ability to shape and elevate the motives and goals of their followers (Lewandowski, 2005:34). They seek to transform their followers' personal values and self-concepts so that they can broaden and

elevate their needs and aspirations to focus on and achieve higher levels of potential. This high level of value judgement is what makes the impact that transformational leaders have on employees' intrinsic motivation stronger than that of other leadership styles (Hobrick, 2003:46). Transformational leaders link group's organizational mission and goals to collective values and ideologies, they emphasize the collective identity of the group or organization, and display exemplary behaviour. Researchers interested in charismatic leadership behaviour have also suggested that such leaders enhance their follower's identification with them, and the followers' attachment to them. Therefore, transformational leaders create high levels of organizational commitment (Strauss, Griffin & Rafferty, 2009:283).

Transformational leadership motivates employees to go beyond standard expectations, as opposed to simply gaining compliance. One reason transformational leadership increases performance is because of its impact on behaviour. Transformational leadership behaviours have been associated with follower's identification with and attachment to the group or organization. The focus of transformational leaders is on commitment to the team and to the organization. Research suggests that transformational leaders increase the followers' self-efficacy (Strauss *et al.*, 2009:283). Farahani, Taghadosi and Behboudi (2011: 212) are in agreement with Strauss *et al.* when they state that transformational leadership is capable of encouraging followers to do more work than is expected of them. Organizations with transformational leadership cultures tend to be more effective, for example by being better able to adapt to change. Transformational leadership is related to employees' perception of the effectiveness of a leader and their satisfaction with a leader, enhanced motivation, greater effort, better job performance and greater job satisfaction, greater innovative work behaviour, and greater involvement with a work team (Farahani *et al.*, 2011:212).

Transformational leadership fuses the leader's vision so strongly with the follower that both are motivated by high moral and ethical principles. Transformational leadership requires four interrelated components. To enable leaders to move followers to adopt the transformational style involves idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Ryan, 2007: 43). Ling and Ling

(2012:159) and House (in Farahani *et al.*, 2012) go further and explain each of the components of transformational leadership.

### **Components of transformational leadership**

Bass (in Demir, 2008:95) argues that transformational leadership refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation or individualized consideration. Discussed here are the four components of transformational leadership.

#### ***Idealized influence***

In leadership literature the first component or dimension of transformational leadership is idealistic influence, or in the view of some authors, it is charisma or charismatic leadership. House (in Farahani *et al.*, 2012) states that the three major characteristics of charismatic leaders are as follows: having a high level of self-confidence, a need for having high influence, and the capability for convincing followers of the fact that their beliefs are ethically correct (Farahani *et al.*, 2011:212). Transformational leaders behave in ways that allow them to serve as role models for their followers. These leaders are admired, respected and trusted. Followers identify with these leaders and want to emulate them. Transformational leaders are considered by their followers as having extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and determination. Thus, there are two aspects to idealized influence: the leader's behaviour and the elements that are attributed to the leader by his or her followers and other associates. Leaders who have a great deal of idealized influence are also willing to take risks and are consistent, rather than arbitrary (Ling and Ling, 2016:159).

#### ***Inspirational motivation***

An increase in the awareness of the mission and view of an organization and motivating followers to perceive such issues and to attract their commitment towards the organization are among the major aspects of inspiring motivation. Inspiring motivation considers the existing principles in the organization and stirs followers within these principles (Farahani *et al.*, 2011:212). Transformational leaders behave

in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning to their followers and by challenging them in their work. Team spirit is aroused, and enthusiasm and optimism are displayed. Leaders get followers involved in envisioning attractive future states, they create clearly communicated expectations that followers want to meet, and also demonstrate commitment to goals and the shared vision. Inspirational motivation leadership and inspirational motivation usually form a combined single factor of charismatic-inspirational leadership (Ling and Ling, 2016:159).

### ***Intellectual stimulation***

Intellectual stimulation or mental encouragement implies that a leader encourages his or her followers to discover new solutions and rethink organizational problems in order to resolve them. In fact, the behaviour of a leader challenges followers to redouble their efforts for fulfilling work and to rethink those issues which need resolving (Farahani *et al.*, 2011:213). Transformational leaders stimulate their followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. Creativity is encouraged. There is also no public criticism of individual member's mistakes. New ideas and creative solutions to problems are solicited from followers who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions. Followers are encouraged to try new approaches, and their ideas are not criticized because they differ from the leader's ideas (Ling and Ling, 2016:159).

### ***Individualized consideration***

In the individualized or personal consideration point of view, the dynamic leader analyses and follows the needs of each person through establishing a relationship with each member of a group separately. The leader will stimulate each individual via creating relationships with and assigning duties to him or her, considering the personal differences of the members of the group. It is noteworthy that such leaders pay close attention to the personal differences of their followers and they always work alongside their followers as consultants and guide them with due consideration to the characteristics of each person (Farahani *et al.*, 2011:213). Transformational leaders

also pay special attention to each individual follower's need for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. Followers and colleagues are developed to successfully reach higher levels of potential. Individualized consideration is practical when new learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate, and individual differences in terms of needs are recognized. The leader's behaviour demonstrates acceptance of individual differences. A two-way exchange in communication is encouraged and management by walking around the workspace is practiced. Interactions with followers are personalized. The individually considerate leader listens effectively and delegates tasks as a means of developing followers. Delegated tasks are monitored to see if the followers need additional direction or support and to assess progress. Ideally followers should not feel that they are being checked on (Ling and Ling, 2016:159).

In a school scenario, we can thus say that transformational leadership focuses on the importance of teamwork and comprehensive school improvement as an alternative to other models. At issue in transformational leadership is more than who makes decisions, but more importantly, finding a way to be successful by collaboratively defining the essential purpose of teaching and learning. It entails empowering the entire school learning community to become focused and driven. In schools that maintain these components, teaching and learning become transformative for everyone involved (Ryan, 2007:47).

The following leadership style is the transactional leadership style.

### **2.3.4 The transactional leadership style**

This leadership approach uses the reward system. With transactional leadership there is an implied social contract indicating that if the follower goes along with what the leaders wants done, the follower will gain certain benefits, such as pay or promotion. In short, the transactional leader shows the follower how to be rewarded (France, 2008:15). This leadership style is based upon the traditions and the past. Transactional leaders form their organisational culture with the existing rules, procedures and norms. As stated above by France, the administrators who exhibit the behaviour of a transactional leader use their power to reward their employees and give



money and status to them to make them exert more effort (Akan, 2013:597). Riaz and Haider agree with Akan that transactional leadership is centred on leader-follower exchanges. Followers perform according to the will and direction of the leaders and the leaders positively reward their efforts. The baseline is reward, which can be negative like punitive action if the followers fail to comply with the leader's instructions, or it can be positive like praise and recognition if subordinates comply with the intent and direction decided on by the leader and if they achieve the given objectives (Riaz & Haider, 2010:30).

McCleskey (2014:122) goes even further by saying these exchanges allow leaders to accomplish their performance objectives, complete required tasks, maintain the current organisational situation, motivate followers towards the achievement of established goals.

Transactional leaders focus on the basic functions of management, control, organisation and short-term planning. Transactional leaders are focused on standards, policies and procedures. They have a very narrow focus and do not encourage creativity and new ideas. This style of leadership works best when organisational problems are simple and clearly defined. Inflexibility of leadership is a characteristic of this model so any attempt to change this type of leadership is difficult and often unsuccessful because the leadership style is part of the person and his or her personal characteristics, and that is something unchangeable (Nikezic, Puric & Puric, 2012:287).

### **2.3.5 The situational leadership style**

The situational leadership style is more concerned with the context of applied leadership (France, 2008:8). Situational leadership is based on the premise that leaders use a different style depending on the situation. It follows that the situational leader must focus on the impact of the context when performing his or her duties as a school leader. The core competencies of a situational leader are the ability to diagnose the performance, competence and commitment of others, to be flexible, and to be a partner for performance (Lynch, McComark & McCance, 2011:1060).



Situational leadership proposes that effective leadership requires a rational understanding of the situation and an appropriate response (McCleskey, 2014:118).

### **2.3.6 The instructional leadership style**

Instructional leadership may be defined as the acts of school administrators, which include both their obligatory duties and other acts to affect the behaviour of school staff to support these duties (Buluc, 2015:176). Instructional leadership occurs when the principal provides direction, resources and support to both educators and learners with the aim of improving teaching and learning at the school (Kruger, 2003:206).

Research on instructional leadership has focused on the activities of school principals since the mid-1980s. The major findings of these studies indicate that a strong instructional leader is key to improving educational quality and to provide systematic development in schools (Buluc, 2015:176).

Good instructional leadership is the path to good teaching and learning and instructional leaders ensure a sound culture of learning and teaching in their schools at all times. Although there are different views on the precise nature of the instructional leadership task of the principal, many authors identify specific management functions or elements of the principal's management task that have a significant effect on teaching and learning results. Several efforts have been directed to identify commonalities within a vast array of research data on the instructional role of the principal. The following five functions generally typify instructional leadership: defining and communicating a clear mission, goals and objectives; managing curriculum and instruction; supervising teaching; monitoring learner progress and promoting the instructional climate (Kruger, 2003:207)

### **2.3.7 Charismatic leadership**

In charismatic leadership, the leader transforms the subordinates' interests to match those of the leader. From a charismatic leadership theory perspective, the central dimension is the leader's charisma. Charismatic leaders are highly-esteemed people, who are gifted with exemplary qualities. Such individuals tend to display confidence,

dominance, a sense of purpose, and the ability to articulate the goals and ideals for which followers are prepared psychologically. Charismatic leadership occurs when the leader has a major impact on his or her subordinates (France, 2008:16).

The main characteristics and behavioural traits of charismatic leaders include articulating an appealing vision, communicating high performance expectations, expressing confidence in followers' abilities to achieve goals, displaying self-confidence, modelling exemplary behaviour, showing sensitivity to followers' needs, emphasising the ideological aspects of work and a collective identity, taking personal risks, and displaying unconventional behaviour. By means of these attributes, charismatic leaders are able to form a unique emotional and value-based bond with their followers. Through role-modelling behaviour and frame alignment, charismatic leaders develop followers' values and beliefs to be congruent and complementary with the leaders' ideology, goals and activities. Charismatic leaders are able to increase their followers' intrinsic effort and goal accomplishment effort, accomplishment expectancies, and prospects and hopes for a better future state (Endrissat, Muller & Fontana, 2006:5).

### **2.3.8 Participative leadership**

Participative leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader permits subordinates to take part in decision-making and also gives them a considerable degree of autonomy in completing tasks (Pedraja-Rejas, Rodrigues-Ponce and Rodriguez-Ponce, 2006:502). Participative theories suggest that the ideal leadership style is the one that takes into account the inputs of others. These leaders encourage the participation and contribution of group members and help group members feel more relevant and committed to the decision-making process. In participative theories, however, the leader retains the right to allow the input of others (Van Wagner, 2008:1). Participative leaders empower their employees in the decision-making process by meeting with them periodically and listening to them. Participative leadership is thus the extent to which a leader involves others in making decisions for which the leader has formal authority and responsibility. Participative leadership requires and encourages participation from everyone and shares decision-making for the betterment of the organisation. Employee motivation is derived through obtaining

financial and self-image awards. Research provides a plethora of findings to support the implementation of participative leadership, such as increased occupational contentment, organisational allegiance, and organisation ownership behaviour, apparent support, labour-management collaboration and employee performance (Conveyer, 2010: 14).

There's a number of leadership styles leadership styles that can be used by school principals, only a few are discussed here. The dimensions of leadership are an important aspect of this study as the study assessed the leadership efficacy of school principals in their performance of the different dimensions of leadership. The following focuses on the discussion of the leadership dimensions.

## **2.4 Leadership dimensions**

Leadership in the opinion of the researcher plays an important role in the success of teaching and learning. In this study the researcher assessed the leadership efficacy of the school principals in the performance of their tasks as school leaders and managers. This was done by focusing on eight dimensions of leadership. These eight dimensions included the following: Instructional leadership and staff development, School climate and development, Community collaboration, Data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles, Resource and facility management, Use of community resources, Communication in a diverse environment and the Development of school vision (McCollum, Kajs and Minter, 2006).

A number of leadership dimensions are identified by different authors. There are both similarities and differences in leadership dimensions as discussed by the different authors. The Wallace Foundation (2013:6) identified the following leadership dimensions: Developing a vision, that is setting direction, Creating a hospitable climate in their schools, Cultivating leadership in others, Improving instruction and Managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement. De Bettignies (2014:1) pointed out four leadership dimensions as including Awareness, Vision, Imagination, Responsibility and Action. He further states that these dimensions need to be considered at an individual level by the leader him or herself, at an organizational level as well as at the societal level. These leadership dimensions in the opinion of the

researcher are very important as they contribute to the success of the school as well a whole.

Leadership, leadership styles as well as leadership dimensions used by principals to manage schools have been explained. The role of principals as school leaders and managers will be unpacked in the following section.

## **2.5 The role of principals as school leaders and managers**

School principals play a key role in school improvement and in improving learner achievement. They engage in a range of activities that improve teacher practice and learner outcomes. These activities include building vision and setting direction, understanding and developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the teaching and learning programme. Principals also play a key role in general school improvement activities as schools are restructured and teacher practices are improved (Waldron, McLeskey & Redd, 2011:51).

Research carried out in three Asian countries show that the main functions of school principals are personnel management, student management, finance management, administrative management, general management, curriculum management, teaching responsibilities and logistics (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:63).

### ***Personnel management***

The role of the principal entails numerous responsibilities to manage school personnel in an endeavour to create a safe and effective learning environment (Cisler & Bruce, 2013: 11). According to Christie (2010:704), the school principal provides professional leadership within the school. The role of the principal is to guide, supervise and offer professional advice on the work and performance of all staff in the school and where necessary to discuss and write or countersign reports on teaching, support, non-teaching and other staff. He or she ensures that workloads are equitably distributed among the staff members.

Recruitment and selection is another task performed by the school principal. Recruitment in Bangladesh does not fall exclusively under the authority of head teachers. Different commissions are involved. In Korea, principals have the power to select assigned teachers and class teachers, to transfer teachers to different departments, and to recruit temporary teachers. They also make decisions with regard to re-assignment and they recommend teachers for training with a view to promotion and qualification awards and the re-assessment of salary scales (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:64).

### ***Planning and support***

Planning defines where the school wants to be in future and how to get there. Plans and the goals on which they are based give purpose and direction to the school, its sub-units and contributing staff. Planning is important because it provides staff with a sense of purpose and direction, outlines the tasks they will be performing, and explains their activities and how these tasks are related to the overall goals of the school. Without this information, staff would not know precisely how to use their time and energies efficiently and effectively (Lunenburg, 2010:2).

Planning is important because it provides staff with a sense of purpose and direction, outlines the kinds of tasks they will be performing, and explains how their activities are related to the overall goals of the school. Without this information, staff would not know how to use their time efficiently and effectively (Lunenburg, 2010:2). In my opinion, planning of the teacher's work through the assignment of tasks and the distribution of workload is a crucial activity of the school principals in all countries. This implies the preparation of timetables, assigning specific duties, distributing teaching load, granting leave, and ensuring a fair balance.

Principals also play a key role in more general school improvement activities. This includes strong support from the principal as schools develop a culture that is supportive to teachers, provide opportunities to develop teachers as leaders within the school, develop a collaborative learning community that is supportive of teacher learning, and provide teachers with opportunities for high quality professional development (Waldron *et al.*, Redd, 2011:51). Kandasemy and Blaton (2004:65) are

in agreement that the role of school principals in supporting teachers is important. They state that the fundamental task of the head teacher is to support his or her staff.

### ***Student management***

Managing students is primarily the task of the individual teacher, but the head teacher retains an overall responsibility. School principals are involved in certain operational services such as admission, transfer, promotion, registration of students, scholarship arrangements, safety and disciplinary issues, health services, and guidance and counselling provision (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:66). School principals are also responsible for managing improvement in student achievement. For example, a review of research evidence by Leithwood (in Waldron *et al.*, 2011) revealed that principals engage in a range of activities that improve teacher practice and student outcomes. Those activities include building vision and setting direction, understanding and developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the teaching learning programme (Waldron *et al.*, 2011:51).

### ***Financial management***

The tasks undertaken by head teachers in financial management differ in the functioning of financial autonomy. Their duties are mainly limited to administering relatively small funds within tight limits. They have to ensure appropriate accounts for the funds received and expended by schools (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:67).

Mestry (in Tlale, 2011:22) mentions that in terms of financial matters, the principal should have various kinds of school accounts, and records should be kept properly. The principal should also make the best use of the funds available for the benefit of learners in consultation with the appropriate structures. The function of school principals as financial managers is to ensure that they adhere to correct procurement procedures which are fair and transparent, to put in place a system or structure that will coordinate the assessment of all projects, and to accept responsibility for the effective use of the assets and funds of the school.

## ***Curriculum management***

According to Kyahurwa (2013:14), curriculum management is a term commonly used by many scholars to describe the leadership of the core functions of teaching and learning. It means the interpretation of the curriculum policy in schools by the principal and ensuring that the design features that strengthen the curriculum are accepted and promoted in the classroom setting.

The core role of a school principal is to ensure full implementation of the curriculum. In most countries, the power to determine school curricula rests with the Ministry of Education or a national body. School principals might play a role in these bodies. The power of school principals in curriculum management is however limited (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:70).

## ***Teaching responsibilities***

In countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan, school principals have teaching responsibilities. A survey conducted in Bangladesh shows that all principals have the responsibility of classroom teaching, with an average teaching load of 13 periods per week. In Pakistan, by law, principals are required to teach at least two subjects. However, only a few principals take the responsibility of teaching, the reason being that they have no spare time for teaching due to the burden of school administration. Because principals are usually chosen from amongst teachers, many of them continue to teach while also working as the principal. At primary school level, the number of teachers is so limited that in most cases the principal has to teach as much as the teachers (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:72).

In research conducted by Moonsammy-Koopsammy (2012:83), on the role of school principals as instructional leaders, the principals indicated that they would be in a better position to support and communicate good teaching if they are engaged in teaching learners themselves. One of the principals in the study by Moonsammy-Koopsammy stated that the benefits of teaching is gaining insight in what is going on in classes. The implication of this study, in the opinion of the researcher, is that school principal gain insight into the challenges and frustrations that teachers experience in

the classroom with regard to different aspects of teaching including planning and assessment.

### ***Logistics***

Principals are also responsible for instructional materials and the school buildings. The principal is responsible for managing books and other supplies. In some schools, the school runs a tuck shop that supplies stationery, books and refreshments to the learners. The principal is also responsible for the supervision of the school's daily income and expenditure. Instructional materials and other supplies must be received, stored and efficiently distributed, as needed. The maintenance of school buildings is explicitly mentioned as a responsibility of the principal. They are responsible for the supervision of the maintenance and the upkeep of the school buildings and facilities (Kandasemy & Blaton, 2004:72-73).

### ***School climate***

School climate is directly impacted by the leadership practices of the principal. The principal's ability to motivate staff and to facilitate the development of quality instructional practices impacts the success of the learners. Principals are responsible for maintaining a climate that is collegial, interactive and focused on supporting the teachers and learners throughout the education process. By setting the tone, principals cultivate teacher morale, parent partnerships and professional collegiality, which in turn influences the delivery of instruction. School climate is not stagnant but rather a continuously changing condition that needs to be monitored and cultivated. The school principal as the school leader monitors the climate and adjusts the processes and practices in order to keep the environment healthy and flourishing (Fultz, 2011:65). School principals are responsible for creating a happy school by focusing on creating a sense of identity, discipline, pastoral care and ownership among the learners (McCallum, 2012:64). Cisler & Bruce (2013:11) echo the same sentiments as they also maintain that the school principal is responsible for creating a safe learning environment.



Effective principals ensure that their schools allow both adults and children to learn at the centre of their daily activities. Such a healthy environment is characterised by basics like safety and orderliness, as well as less tangible qualities such as a supportive, responsive attitude toward the children and a sense among the teachers that they are a community of professionals focused on good instruction. The most effective principals focus on building a sense of school community, an upbeat, welcoming, solution-oriented, no blame, professional environment and efforts to involve staff and students in a variety of activities, many of them school wide (The Wallace Foundation, 2013:8).

### ***Monitoring***

According to Bush, Kiggundu and Van Rooyen (2009), monitoring involves visiting classrooms, observing teachers at work, and providing them with feedback. They further state that the English Office of Standards in Education found that there was a strong link between good monitoring and good teaching.

When school principals compare expected results with actual results, and take the necessary corrective action, they are performing the monitoring function. Monitoring is the responsibility of every principal. It may simply consist of walking around the building to see how things are going, talking to students, visiting classrooms, talking to the teachers, or it may involve designing sophisticated information systems to check on the quality of performance but it must be done if the principal is to be successful (Linenburg, 2010:4).

## **2.6 Problems in appointing school principals**

The common problem about the appointment of school principals was and still is that principal-ship is regarded as just another job, which even though senior, could be executed by any educator who excelled in teaching. It should be acknowledged that principal-ship is a special position which requires special training. The general pattern that exists is that one must first become an educator, then be promoted to a departmental head or deputy principal, and then later to the post of principal (Maile, 2012:205). In many countries, including South Africa, school leaders begin their

professional career as teachers and progress to headship via a range of leadership tasks and roles, often described as “middle management”. This leads to the widespread view that teaching is their main activity and that a teaching qualification and teaching experience are the only requirements for school leadership.

The following section focuses on the problems encountered when appointing principals. The focus will be on both the international and South African contexts. The first problem which is discussed is the influence of labour unions in appointing principals.

### **2.6.1 The International context**

#### ***The influence of labour unions in appointing school principals***

In Mexico when appointing a school principal, in addition to other requirements, the potential principal should meet the requirements to be appointed as principal, but there also seems to be present the influence of the teachers' union that favours the appointment of its supporters. It is also pointed out that the union has always aimed at a large representation in the positions of leadership in schools as a means of political control of the staff. Raimers (in Delgado, 2015) reported that the teachers' union plays a large role in hiring, retaining and promoting teachers. This situation has generated incorporating new teachers to the profession based on their political affiliation to the union, which sometimes implies the selling, buying and inheriting of posts. Hevia *et al.* (in Delgado, 2015) point out that the appointment of heads of schools in Mexico is based on the relationship that those seeking a leadership post have with the teachers' union more than their pedagogical, leadership and managerial skills (Delgado, 2015). In the researcher's opinion, this means that incompetent people can be appointed to leadership positions, if they are appointed based on which labour union they are affiliated to.

Another major challenge in appointing school principals is learning on the job because inexperienced people are appointed in leadership positions. This challenge will be discussed now.

## ***Learning on the job***

Beginner principals struggle to understand how they are supposed to act, what they are supposed to know, and what they are supposed to do. They only have pre-conceived ideas that have developed through observation of previous school principals during their teaching careers. The only way to learn the role is to live the position (Athanasoula-Reppa, Lazaridou & Lyman: 6).

Ibrahim (2011:296) on his research on the preparation and development of public secondary school principals in Kenya, also emphasises the fact that school principals learn on the job. He states that the day-to-day challenges and problems faced by principals in schools and their attempts to solve them provide them with lessons from which they can learn and develop. These challenges or problems make some principals resilient and prepare them on how to solve future problems of the same nature. Cunningham and Cordeiro (in Ibrahim 2011) state that it is from such challenges that leaders gain knowledge, growth, order and renewal. This gives them strength and confidence to undertake their duties, stronger and rejuvenated. This argument by Ibrahim indicates that principals learning on the job is not necessarily a bad thing as the challenges they face strengthen them in the performance of their duties. The observation made by the researcher is based on the arguments by different researchers is that some of the school principals learn on the job how to perform their duties.

The next challenge faced by principals is the gender imbalance in their appointment.

## ***Gender imbalances***

According to Wanjru (2011:2), the findings of a study conducted in Kenya indicates gender imbalances in education administration, even though women prepare themselves for leadership positions. Women have remained in the lower ranks and grades of the teaching profession. They are clustered in the low and middle job categories. The challenge of gender inequality is not peculiar to Kenya, but it is a worldwide problem. Socialisation and gender roles in different countries seem to be a strong factor in relation to gender imbalances in educational administration. There

is a societal perception that women are emotional. This perception affects women in decision-making positions. In Kenya, the situation is similar to that of other countries although there are no discriminatory laws. A review of the gender imbalance in education administration indicated gender disparities. Female teachers mostly serve as school administrators in secondary schools for girls. The determinants of the gender imbalance among teacher administrators are gender roles as determined in different societies, self-perception, socialisation and gender stereotypes, a lack of mentors and education qualifications.

Another study that examined gender differences in administrative opportunities was conducted in Nigeria by Adegbesan (2013:52). The study found that it is important to note that administrative opportunities that are available need to be shared by competent persons drawn from both sexes. The findings suggest that the age-old stereotype; sex role identity remains in full force as far as the administration of schools is concerned. Oketa and Tobi (in Adegbesan, 2013) noted that the discrimination in the distribution of privileged positions is not only common, but continues to re-occur in political and social discourse. Some people believe that administrative functions are essentially masculine in nature. The findings of the study by Adegbesan on gender differences in administrative opportunities concluded that there is a significant gender imbalance in administrative opportunities in secondary schools. The gender imbalance exists in regards to the distribution of such opportunities. The study also found that gender differences do not affect a principal's administrative effectiveness.

In the view of the researcher, this means that gender differences have no effect on the effectiveness of school principals. This further clarifies that both men and women are capable of performing the duties required in school administration.

Problems experienced in relation to the appointment of principals in the international context have been discussed. Next, we will focus on the situation in South Africa.

## **2.6.2 The South African context**

It is important to note that in South Africa, according to Mathibe (2007), some principals are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership. As

a result, principals experience a culture shock as they cross the threshold from teaching into principal-ship.

In the view of the researcher, this culture shock is caused by the fact that principals are not prepared for the position of principal-ship. Dehaloo (2008), identified problems in appointing principals in South Africa; these include the following: the influence of labour unions in appointing school principals, learning on the job, gender imbalances and level-hopping.

The first problem in appointing principals in South Africa is the influence of labour unions in appointing school principals.

### ***The influence of labour unions in appointing school principals***

Patillo (2012:59) on the influence of labour unions in appointing school principals states that through cadre deployment, loyal unionists have been appointed to school leadership positions. These cadres are appointed based on their union activism, rather than their qualifications or proven track record of effective leadership or potential to improve a school. Teacher Unions according to Patillo, influence the kind of educators chosen to lead schools based on whether or not educators are loyal to the union and have been supportive of strikes. In doing so, Patillo maintains that the unions rewards and encourages union activism rather than effective leadership. According to Zengele (2013:22) the actual involvement of teacher unions at school level during the filing of promotional posts is marked by commotion and turmoil. He further states that stakeholders in education indicate various individuals come to the business of filling posts at school level with different agendas other than the one of ensuring that the best candidate gets the post.

The problem of the influence of labour unions in appointing school principals is also raised by Mthiyane, Bengu and Bayeni (2014:300) when they state that the manipulation of recruitment processes by both the School Governing Body and Teacher Unions has had detrimental results for schools. They maintain that the incompetence among SGB members combined with interference by teacher unions has compromised the efficiency of the recruitment processes as people affiliated to a

particular union are said to get posts irrespective of the qualifications or potential. School principals who participated in this study by Bengu *et al.* lamented the negative role played by Teacher Unions and its impact on the school and in education in general. Ramokgotswa (2015:96) reiterates Zengele and Mthiyane *et al.* sentiment as the findings in his study on the role of teacher unions in the appointment and promotion of teachers in public schools, indicate that Teacher Union's role in the appointment of school principals is viewed as negative and biased, as their own needs or those of their members are crucial to them.

The next challenge is learning on the job. This according to the researchers is a challenge for newly appointed school principals as they learn on the job to perform their duties as school principals.

### ***Learning on the job***

In South Africa, the situation at present, made possible by legislation, is that Post Level 1 educators are applying successfully for the post of principal without the required tools of trade and they are learning on the job through arranged mentorship programmes (Dehaloo, 2008:15). In the opinion of the researcher, being a school principal for some means learning through trial and error, since they were not trained for the positions they hold. This in turn leads to failure of school principals to perform their duties and leads to negative leadership efficacy of school principals.

The problem of gender imbalances, that is, having fewer female than male principals, in appointing principals is also a problem in South Africa, as it is a problem internationally.

### ***Gender imbalances***

Another problem in appointing principals in South Africa is the representation of women in educational management positions. Women are disadvantaged in the process of school principal appointment due to gender bias. In South African schools, women are a minority in management positions even though they outnumber males outside the ranks of school management teams (SMTs). It is confirmed that male

dominance in education management is a worldwide phenomenon. He states that in South Africa, management has traditionally been male-dominated at the senior levels, and women largely occupy positions in middle management. Gender bias is thus the unseen barrier to women's career mobility into higher levels of school management (Dehaloo, 2008:15).

In an article published in *City Press* on 23 August 2013, the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, stated that men continue to dominate school principal positions despite an overwhelming number of women in the education sector. In 2013, according to this news report, there were only 8210 female principals and 14 337 male principals appointed in permanent positions in South Africa. Minister Motshekga further said that there are 257 633 female teachers and 119 579 male teachers. She emphasised that gender inequality persisted in the educational sector, particularly in high schools or secondary schools. She highlighted the fact that in secondary schools the majority of principals, their deputies and heads of departments are male (Motshekga, 2013:1).

Another problem in appointing school principals in South Africa is job level-hopping. This issue is discussed in the following section.

### ***Level-hopping***

Personnel in schools are deployed in terms of levels ranging from Post Level 1 to Post Level 4. The South African Schools Act permits any educator to apply for a promotion to a post level of his or her choice, provided that the individual has the minimum qualification (that is M+3 or REQV 13) and the required minimum years of experience. This situation, is the reason for many challenges that schools experience today, as many principals are not prepared and are ill-equipped for the position of principal. McPherson in Dehaloo (2008), states that school principals by virtue of their position in society ought to have higher academic qualifications and more experience. That is not the case in South Africa at present. Level-hopping should be discouraged and be replaced with a systematic progression of candidates to principal-ship (Dehaloo (2008:14-15).

The process of skipping levels on the promotion continuum to fast-track promotions is referred to as level-hopping. Level-hopping is an example of informal pathways that teachers aspiring to be principals take to reach principal-ship, which are not based on policies for appointment. Level-hopping is common in smaller schools. In the South African school system it is possible for Post Level 1 teachers to apply for any school position in the school hierarchy. This is in compliance with the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, which permits any teacher to apply for promotion to any post level of choice, within the school hierarchy. This situation is a result of the lack of specific criteria for promotion to principal-ship. This results in ineffective schools because of ineffective personnel appointed to leadership positions (Nkuna, 2014:21-22). Post Level 1 teachers, according to Dehaloo (in Nkuna: 2014), have a great deal of knowledge concerning the delivery of the curriculum as classroom practitioners, but they lack the required knowledge and skills to manage and lead.

It is important to note that as much as the challenges experienced by school principals are the same both in the international context and in the South African context, there are challenges that are peculiar to the South African situation. For example, level hopping seems to be a problem that is peculiar to the South African situation.

## **2.7 Challenges faced by school principals**

School principals face a number of challenges. These challenges have an impact on how they perceive their ability to perform their duties as principals. Some of the challenges experienced by them are contextual and others are external. To overcome these challenges, principals need to acquire new managerial and leadership skills which will enable them to carry out their tasks competently. Very few principals have however undergone such training. Principals in South Africa are expected to manage their schools effectively, although little has been offered to them in terms of high-level management training or even basic management training. This deficiency needs to be addressed so that principals are able to perform their roles effectively (Mazibuko, 2007:73).

In the next section, the challenges experienced by principals in managing and leading schools will be discussed at both the international and national level.



## 2.7.1 The International context

### ***Contextual challenges or in-school challenges***

Atieno and Simatwa (2012:390) identify challenges faced by schools principals, especially newly appointed principals. They indicate that principals face challenges characterised by issues such as inadequate teaching and learning resources, student absenteeism, non-committed staff, financial constraints, and teacher shortages. They further categorise these challenges as support staff management-based challenges, teacher management-based challenges, student management-based challenges, challenges that arise from parent involvement in school activities, and financial management-based challenges.

#### *Staff management-based challenges*

Staff management-based challenges include incompetence, shortage of staff, poor morale, absenteeism and negative attitudes. The teacher management-based challenges include insubordination, uncooperative staff, incompetence, absenteeism and shortage of teachers (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012:391). Another challenge experienced by principals is lack of support from the members of the school management team. Diminishing in-school administrative support is a key area of concern, with the decrease in heads of departments considered as an enormous loss of in-school and administrative support for the secondary school principal. In these conditions the school leader often feels isolated, overwhelmed and powerless to accomplish the job (Phillips & Remihan, 2003:29).

#### *Parents' involvement in school activities*

Challenges that arise from parents' involvement in school activities include failure to pay school fees, uncooperative parents, a negative attitude, threats to principals, and the failure to attend Parents-Teachers Association meetings (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012:391). Jackson, Tumer and Battle (2015:32) are in agreement with Atieno and Simatwa when they state that another challenge school principals have is the frustration regarding poor parent attendance at school events. School principals also

complain of the small number of rude parents, insulting parents, and sometimes violent parents who discourage the school staff from seeking greater parent involvement.

### *Student management-based challenges*

Student management-based challenges are poor performance in national exams, absenteeism, high enrolments and shortage of textbooks (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012:391). Preetika and Priti (2013:39) in their study on challenges faced by school principals in India highlighted lack of discipline, respect and morals as some of the challenges of school principals. They also maintain that absenteeism and bunking the school are other challenges facing school principals. According to Salem Al-amarat, (2011:37) the challenges relating to the learners include disorder, theft, properties vandalism as well as violence against teachers and learners. Learners with disruptive behaviour cause disciplinary problems in the classroom.

### *Unsafe environments*

Lacoe (2012:3) states that a safe environment is a prerequisite for productive learning. If learners feel unsafe in the classroom, it is likely that they are less able to concentrate in class and perform well in assessment. Duke, Tucker and Salmonowicz, (2007:43) in their study found that living in impoverished neighbourhoods and communities can expose young people to heightened levels of gang activity and substance abuse. These problems frequently spill over into schoolyards, classroom and corridors, presenting educators with enormous challenges.

School principals, in a study by Markow and Dancewics (2008:84), indicated a range of types of support which were helpful in their efforts to create a safe environment for the learners at their schools. The principals were of the opinion that the support of the superintendent or district administration, resources from professional organisations, support from the school board, families and community members, professional development, and anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies could be helpful in creating a safe environment.

The contextual challenges facing school principals have been discussed. Next we discuss the external factors affecting how principals manage or lead their schools.

### ***External challenges***

School principals also face increasing demands for accountability from the various departments of education around the world. Over the past 15 years the accountability demands in US, UK and Australia have changed from mere compliance with policy administrative rules to quality assurance and inspection demands based more on systems outputs (student learning outcomes) than on inputs and processes. Where national examinations and systems of testing exist, school leaders, especially principals, are expected to understand student outcomes in their systems, as well as exercise their leadership and better deficiencies or inequities in student learning outcomes. From a cynical point of view, it would be easy to argue that this shift in the devolution of authority coupled with greater accountability of principals is a clever ploy by policy makers to centre the responsibility for educational outcomes on local administrators (school principals), thereby being able to blame them when the national goals or specified educational outcomes are not realised (Young, Crow, Murphy & Ogawa, 2009:405).

### ***Lack of authority***

School district policies and union contracts are found to place limits on the autonomy, flexibility and capacity of the principal. McAdams (in Phillips, Raham & Renihan, 2003:29) notes that the impact of democratic governance and the enhanced power of students, teachers and parents have steadily diminished the principal's authority, despite the fact that the principal is held accountable for student performance. The responsibility of principals without authority leads many principals to increased frustration, stress and diminished job satisfaction (Renihan, Phillips & Raham 2006:29). In a study conducted in Nigeria by Abdul-Rasheed and Bello (2015:3), principals indicated that they have less authority to discipline teachers who are not committed to their duties based on external interference from the secondary school board.

Al-Ghefeli, Ghani and Muhamad (2015:80) are in agreement with Phillips and Renihan when they state that school principals do not have the authority to make decisions on matters affecting their schools. They indicate that General Directorate officials of Oman are afraid of transferring the authority to school principals because that means they would lose some of their power. In the research by Al-Ghefeli *et al.* (2015), principals who participated in the study asserted that the authority has not been transferred to them in instances where the officials of the General Directorate still have the final say in school affairs. One of the principals stated that the General Directorate has to surrender some authority to the school, but they retain the right to force their decisions on the school.

#### *Lack of district support*

In a survey conducted in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia on the role and challenges of school principals, Renihan, Phillips & Raham maintain that although there are noteworthy exceptions, principals are seldom properly supported in their leadership role by school districts. School principals are not provided with technical assistance, adjustment of role expectations, or policies designed to support new knowledge about instructional leadership. Local provision for professional development appropriate to the stages of the principal's career is a responsibility school districts have not taken seriously (Renihan, Phillips & Raham 2006:29).

#### *General Directorate interference*

Al-Ghefeli *et al.* (2013:81) indicated that in their study the principals claimed that the Ministry of Education desired to have the final word regarding the decision-making process, and only gave partial authority to schools.

#### *Rapid changes in education*

In many instances, the rapid pace of reform presents principals with incoherent and conflicting goals, and inadequate lead time to prepare their goals to prepare their school communities for their implementation. Principals across many jurisdictions

state that the quality of their work suffered from the lack of system stability and from constantly changing priorities (Renihan, Phillips & Raham 2006:29).

### *Interference by sponsors*

In Kenya, the involvement of religious sponsors in the management of educational institutions dates back to colonial times. Historically the role of the sponsor has been to develop facilities and provide essential learning resources for the educational institutions they owned. However, their involvement in the management of educational institutions has posed challenges to head teachers, for instance, the nomination of ineffective school governors' chairmen, seeking favours, and the use of school facilities on non-academic activities. Sponsors have been accused of interfering with the school's business, for instance closing down of the school, rejecting principals who have been placed there by the Ministry of Education, and meddling and destabilising the instructional activities of the school system (Onderi, Makori & Bando, 2013).

The following section looks at the personal factors which effect how principals perform their duties.

### ***Personal factors***

#### *Financial management-based challenges*

Some school struggle with financial management. Financial management-based challenges, according to Atieno and Simatwa (2012:391), include fee defaulting, incompetence and budgeting.

#### *Stress*

Stress is a major problem for school principals. A study by Al-Ghefeli, Ghani and Muhamad (2013:1) on challenges experienced by principals found that stress in the workplace is initiated by factors such as insufficient funds, a conflict of interest between the school administration and the General Directorate, and the high expectations of teachers.

## 2.7.2 The South African context

### ***Contextual or in-school challenges***

Regarding the South African context, many schools face severe contextual problems, which would present a serious challenge even for fully trained principals and governors (Scott, 2010: 68).

These problems include the following:

- Lack of basic infrastructure and facilities, such as running water and electricity; some schools have no toilets on the premises
- Insufficient classrooms
- Limited learning equipment and learning materials (e.g. textbooks, overhead projectors, desks, chairs)
- Lack of libraries, laboratories and computer centres
- Lack of sports facilities
- Under-trained and poorly motivated educators
- Illiteracy amongst parents and school governors
- The scourge of HIV and AIDS which is ravaging families, especially in poverty-stricken areas (Scott, 2010: 68).

### ***External challenges***

There is a number of external challenges faced by school principals. School principals have to deal with issues outside their control, for example trade unions and the Department of Education.

#### *Interference by the Department of Education in decision making*

In research conducted by Scott, principals indicated a lack of power to take decisions regarding labour matters at school level. Research by Scott is supported by a study conducted in Mpumalanga by Beeka (2008). The findings in Beeka's study indicated

that the principals also complained about their inability to take decisions involving the day-to-day administration of their schools. Beeka further states that the principal is expected not to act contrary to departmental policy by personally suspending educators, but may encourage teachers to conform to the terms of their service conditions (Beeka, 2008:36).

#### *Lack of developmental support from the Department of Education*

This refers to lack of support for school principals from the district and provincial department officials and the lack of support from the Department of Education (DoE) (Scott, 2010:11). Beeka supports Scott's argument and states that the Mpumalanga Department of Education held workshops to provide developmental support for principals, but adds that most of these workshops did not succeed in achieving the intended objective to capacitate the principals as holistic leaders (Beeka, 2008:37).

#### *Lack of authority to make decisions*

Beeka (2008:36) states that the lack of power to make decisions regarding labour matters at school level is one of the external factors that negatively impact on school leadership. Principals cited the fear of reprisal from organized labour unions and interference by the DoE as factors that negatively impact on the leadership of principals at school level.

#### *Interference by labour unions*

In a study conducted in the Eastern Cape by Msila (2014:16), principals highlighted the challenges of leading schools that have a strong union influence. For the principals in the study, working with an intense teacher union influence poses a number of challenges. The principals pointed out that labour unions frequently claim a space and frequently the principal's power is usurped or taken away, either consciously or unconsciously. The principals indicated that it is complex to be a school leader at a time when teacher unions are growing and becoming more influential in schools. The principals stated that there was a tendency for their management roles to be blurred as the unions tended to determine how schools should be run. Some of the

participants in this study also revealed how despondent the labour union involvement in school management has made them. They said that frequently unions had meetings during school hours and they met with strong opposition and disgruntlement among some union members whenever they tried to explain that the learners come first (Msila, 2014:16). Beeka (2008:36) agrees with Msila about the interferences of teacher unions in how principals manage their schools. The principals in Beeka's study complained about their inability to take decisions; they cited fear of reprisal from organised labour unions.

### ***Personal factors***

Research conducted by Beeka (2008) in the Mpumalanga Province in South Africa highlighted the following personal factors as factors which pose a challenge for school principals in the performance of their duties:

#### *Lack of capacity to manage financial matters*

The Mpumalanga Department of Education has provided guidelines for budgeting and financial management. In most cases though the principal has little or no training in financial management, hence he or she struggles with this aspect. It is further explained that in spite of the efforts of the Mpumalanga Education Department to capacitate principals, this incapacity has not been successfully addressed (Beeka, 2008:37).

#### *Insecurity in delegating duties to school management teams and educators*

School principals' insecurity to delegate responsibility is due to the lack of ability to delegate responsibilities to the rest of the staff members as followers. The insecure principal is hardly expected to delegate responsibilities (Beeka, 2008:39).

#### *Low morale and lack of motivation among principals and staff members*

Beeka (2008:39) states that principals argue that the pressure from the Departmental bureaucracy on the one hand and the educators on the other has led to demotivation



and low morale among principals in most schools. This situation has relegated principals to a position of implementer of policy, without any influence on the formulation of these policies. The contextual, external and personal factors which affect how school principals perform their duties were discussed. The next section focuses on the career preparation programmes for principals in both the international and South African context.

## **2.8 The preparation programmes for school principals**

### **2.8.1 The international context**

Leadership preparation is seen as key to the effectiveness of school principals. It is seen as one of the primary approaches to educational reform and the improvement of student achievement (Parylo, 2013:178). Although leadership preparation and development is a recent phenomenon, research indicates that the preparation and development of principals can lead to school effectiveness and improvement. As a result, many countries (especially in developed countries) have come up with institutions and programmes for the preparation and development of school principals, but not so much has been done in terms of principals' preparation in developed countries (Ibrahim, 2011:291).

Different countries have developed career programmes to try and equip principals to carry out their duties effectively. School principal career preparation programmes from the US, England, China and Brazil will be discussed. The first career preparation programme which will be discussed is from the US.

#### ***United States of America***

In the US it is mandatory for school principals to attain an educational Master's degree and licences to regulate who may become and practice as a principal. However, critics in the US, including principals, have raised numerous concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the leadership preparation provided by university-based programmes and elsewhere: that it is disconnected from real world complexities; that the knowledge base is weak and outdated; that curricula often fail to provide grounding in effective

teaching and learning; that mentorships and internships often lack depth or opportunities to test leadership skills in real situations; and that admission standards lack rigour and as a result, too many graduates will eventually be certified but not truly qualified to effectively lead school-wide change (Scott, 2010: 8).

Leadership preparation in the US has been traditionally conducted by universities and graduate leadership preparation programmes. These programmes were the first to face scrutiny and criticism. As a result, many studies have criticised university-based leader preparation programmes. In light of this criticism, some universities-based leadership programmes were accredited by the Teacher Education (NCATE) and Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) in an effort to improve the quality of the programmes. In addition, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) suggested ISLLC standards with the overall goal of increasing the quality and accountability of leader preparation. Although these standards were criticised by some researchers, they offered much needed guidelines to regulate leader preparation. Therefore, university-based leadership preparation has changed to reflect the needs of school principals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by preparing them to be effective from their first day as principals (Parylo, 2013:178).

Burks conducted research on career preparation programmes for school principals in Pennsylvania, one of the states in the US. The focus was on Principal preparation programmes as approved by Pennsylvania's Department of Education. The findings of this study indicate that the quality of each programme is dictated through the guidelines and mandated standards detailed in the Framework and Guidelines for Principal Preparation Programmes. The findings of this study also indicated from 2012, Pennsylvania had 14 state schools offering school principals preparation programmes under the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), nine of which are approved programmes for principal certification. According to the Framework and Guidelines for Principal Preparation Programmes, Pennsylvania school administrators are expected to implement effective management practices that influence student success and achievement. In a study carried out on principal preparation programmes in Pennsylvania, the findings highlighted that principal preparation programme within the PASSHE school system are not fully structured to

prepare principal candidates for the varied leadership roles required of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders (Burks, 2014:8).

The second career preparation programme discussed is that of England.

### ***England***

In England and the US it is mandatory for school principals to receive some form of formal training before they are appointed as principals. In England, the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), a government funded body, has the responsibility for the professional development of school leaders. From 1 April 2009, it became mandatory for all aspiring principals in England to have completed the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) prior to appointment (Scott, 2010: 8).

The next career preparation programme for principals to be discussed is that of China.

### ***China***

Leader selection in China is influenced by traditional Chinese culture, Communist politico-ideological culture, and Western culture. The principal preparation programme in China is a state-controlled government-funded non-degree programme. Their school districts are the primary providers of the principal preparation programme. The preparation programme does not permit open enrolment that admits whoever comes in with the required academic and professional credentials. Access is therefore limited to only those who are selected as principal aspirants. This highly purposeful programme, on the one hand, guarantees that the government only invests in those they are going to hire for principal positions. On the other hand, it has closed doors to many capable teachers who hold a personal desire to enter school administration. This controlled elitism does not seem to be in accord with China's formally stated aspiration of liberating all the talents and developing each individual's potential. Compared to the highly sophisticated and uniform bureaucratic process in candidate selection, the preparation experience is drastically uneven. Some new principals received preparation for a few months, and others for a year, two years and even a

formal Master's degree on rare occasions. There are still others, particularly those from less developed rural areas or the underdeveloped West, who received no training and were left to swim or sink (Huang and Wiseman, 2011:135).

Next, we look into the school principal career preparation programme offered in Brazil.

### ***Brazil***

In Brazil the selection of school principals and vice-principals occur by election, according to the rules and regulations of the Department of Education for the Federal District, every two years. All principals and vice-principals sign an agreement letter in which they identify their individual goals for the specific period for which they are applying for. It is important to note that in Brazil, leadership is not a career for someone who wants to start in preparation leadership courses, but is a later option for a teacher with a degree in pedagogy and experience which is acquired through specialisation. In Brazil, preparation for the administrator thus comes after being given the job, which contrasts with the leadership preparation required prior to getting the job of administrator in other countries (Borges-Gatewood & McNeal, 2013).

Looking at the way in which the career preparation programmes are designed in different countries, the researcher can conclude that all these programmes have a similar aim, which is to produce competent and effective principals. Even though these programmes aim at achieving this goal, the requirements as to who should be in these programmes vary from country to country. The researcher also found that these programmes are always under scrutiny, as views differ about the content which should be included in these programmes. Now that the career preparation programmes have been discussed from the international context, the focus will now be at these programmes from the South African context.

### **2.8.2 The South African context**

South African schools have the multifaceted and enormous task of establishing an environment that could lead to effective schooling. The aims incorporated in the job of principals in South Africa are set out in a definition prepared by the Labour Relations

Council. These are to ensure that the school is managed satisfactorily and in compliance with applicable legislation, regulations and personnel administration measures, as prescribed (Mestry & Grobler, 2004:2). Thus, it is important for school principals to be trained for the job they are expected to perform.

The role of school principals is pivotal. Principals are considered the leaders in schools and the primary work performance managers (Maforah & Schulze, 2012: 227). There is increasing recognition that effective leadership and management are vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for learners. Schools classified as successful possess competent and sound school leadership, and failure often correlates with inadequate school leadership. School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning. The challenge though is that throughout Africa there is no formal requirement for principals to be trained as school managers. They are often appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with the implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership. However, good teaching abilities are not necessarily an indication that the person appointed will be a capable educational manager (Bush *et al.*, 2011:31-32).

While there is an increasing body of knowledge that leadership makes a significant difference, there is less agreement about what preparation is required to develop appropriate leadership behaviours. The former South African Department of Education introduced programmes in the early 1990s to train school principals. The conclusion reached by Tsukudu and Taylor (in Moloi, 2007:5) was that these programmes were inadequate. The Department of Education acknowledged that the programmes introduced for training school principals were not efficient and responded to this by developing a package of measures linked to the South African Standard for Principal-ship.

The Department of Education introduced a new threshold qualification for aspiring school principals as part of its wider strategy to improve educational standards. The course, initially badged as an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE), was piloted in six provinces from 2007 to 2009. The pilot was open to serving principals as well as to deputy principals and school management team members

aspiring to become principals. Participants were nominated by the provincial departments of education. The ACE is delivered by universities, through a common framework agreed on with the National Department of Education and the National Management and Leadership Committee (NMLC). The first pilot cohort involved only five universities and the Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance. The intention of the course is that it should be different from typical university programmes, in being practice-based. Its primary purpose is to ascertain how much of the course learning has been internalised, made meaning of, and applied in the school. This emphasis on practice resulted from the evidence that although many school leaders hold university qualifications in management, their collective impact on school outcomes had been minimal. Their focus appeared to have been on achieving accreditation rather than improving their schools (Bush *et al.*, 2011:31-32). The South African ACE is believed to be the 'first' national training programme in Africa. The programme is a two-year part-time course at NQF Level 6, and comprises of 120 credits. The core modules of the ACE curriculum are listed in the table below and mapped and compared to the international curriculum for school leadership preparation, proposed by Bush and Jackson (2002:420) from the study of international leadership centres around the world (Scott, 2010: 8).

<b>International Curriculum</b>	<b>National ACE core modules</b>
Leadership: including vision, mission and transformational leadership	Understand school leadership and management in the South African context
Learning and teaching or instructional leadership	Manage teaching and learning
Human resource management and professional development	Lead and manage people
Financial management	Manage organisational systems, physical and financial resources
Management of external relations	Manage policy, planning, school development and governance
	Demonstrate effective language skills in school management and leadership

**Table 1.1 National ACE core modules compared to international curriculum (Scott, 2010: 51)**

In my view, these programmes, whether national or international, aim at equipping school principals with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to manage schools as they encounter different challenges in the performance of their duties. The leadership programmes are designed with the view of having competent school principals. Only competent school principals in my view can manage and lead schools effectively.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with leadership and managerial roles of school principals. It focused on leadership theories, leadership styles and leadership dimensions. Leadership theories that were discussed. Only a few are discussed here and those include the trait theory, the behavioural theory, the contingency or situational theory and the path-goal theory. The leadership dimensions discussed in this chapter differ from author to author. The leadership styles discussed in this chapter include autocratic, democratic, transformational, transactional, the situational, the instructional, charismatic and participative leadership styles. Chapter 2 also focused on the role of school principals as school leaders and managers. Other aspects discussed include problems in appointing school principals, the challenges faced by school principals and the career preparation programmes for school principals. All these aspects are discussed from both the International and the South African perspectives.

Both internationally and in South Africa, school principals identified problems they faced as influenced by contextual, external and personal factors. Contextual factors included staff management-based challenges, challenges arising from parent involvement, and student-based challenges. External challenges identified included lack of authority, lack of district support, interference by the Department of Education officials, rapid changes in education, and interference by sponsors. Personal factors affecting the leadership of principals included the lack of capacity to deal with financial matters, insecurity in delegating duties to school management teams and educators, and low morale and lack of motivation among principals and staff.

The final aspect addressed in this chapter was the preparation programmes for prospective school principals. Different countries worldwide maintain the importance

of having a career preparation programme for school principals. These principal preparation programmes are seen as a way of producing competent principals who can perform their job efficiently. The observation made by the researcher is that these programmes are not making the impact they should because of the ways in which they are organised. In some countries they will thus make more of a positive impact on principal leadership practices, whilst in other countries the impact of such programmes will not be felt. Therefore countries should constantly evaluate their programmes and check if they meet the demands of the constantly changing role of principals.



## CHAPTER 3

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE: LEADERSHIP EFFICACY

#### 3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 focuses on the review of literature about leadership efficacy. In this chapter, we discuss the social cognitive theory, self-efficacy, leadership efficacy and its effect on the leadership practices of the school principal, as well as the different leadership styles, and the impact of these leadership styles on the school climate.

#### 3.2 The social cognitive theory

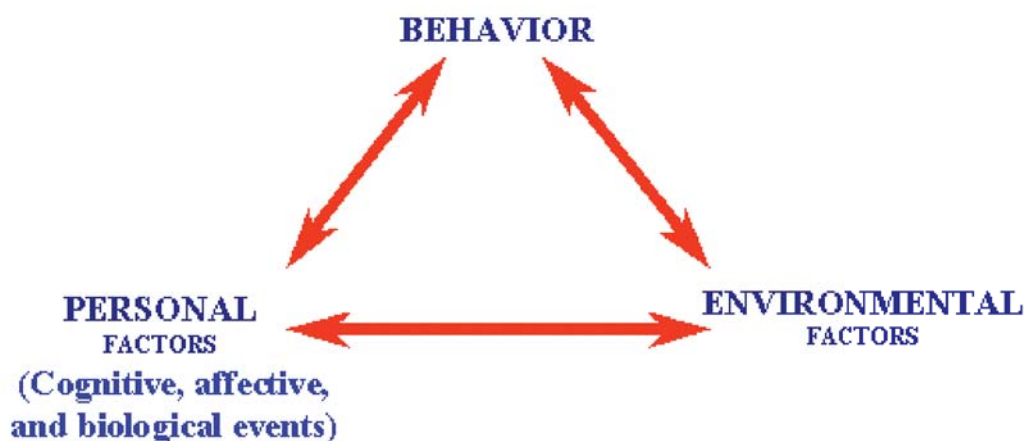


Figure 3.1 (Pajares, 2002:1)

The social cognitive theory explains how people acquire and maintain behavioural patterns (Pajares, 2002:1). This theory is rooted in a view of human agency in which individuals are agents proactively engaged in their own development and they can make things happen by their actions. Key to this sense of agency is the fact that, among other personal factors, individuals possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings and actions; what people think, believe and feel thus affects how they behave (Pajares, 2002:1). The social cognitive theory, used in psychology, education and communication, holds that portions of an individual's knowledge acquisition can be directly linked to observing others within the context of social interactions, experiences and outside influences.

The theory states that when people observe a model performing a certain behaviour and see the consequences of that behaviour, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviour. Observing a model can also prompt the viewer to engage in a behaviour they have already learned. In other words, people do not learn new behaviour solely by trying it and either succeeding or failing, but rather, the survival of humanity is dependent upon the replication of the actions of others. Depending on whether people are rewarded or punished for their behaviour and the outcome of the behaviour, the observer may choose to replicate the behaviour modelled ([https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Socialcognitive\\_theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Socialcognitive_theory))

Self-efficacy will be discussed in the next section.

### **3.3 What is self-efficacy?**

Self-efficacy is defined as the beliefs in one's capability to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. These beliefs are important because they are predictive of human behaviour (Nye, 2008:2).

According to Bandura (in Gist, 2010), "Self-efficacy, a key component in Bandura's social learning theory refers to one's belief in one's capability to perform a specific task". The relationship between beliefs about capacity and outcomes are reciprocal outcomes; they affect efficacy beliefs, and beliefs contribute to higher attainments (Ross & Gray, 2006:7). Self-efficacy arises from the gradual acquisition of complex cognitive, social, linguistic and/or physical skills through experience. Individuals appear to weigh, integrate and evaluate information about their capabilities. They then regulate their choices and efforts accordingly (Gist, 2010). Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being and personal accomplishment. This is because unless people believe that their actions can produce the outcomes they desire, they have little incentive to persevere in the face of difficulties (Pajares, 2002:11).

Bandura (in Pajares, 2002:11) proposed a view of human functioning that emphasized the role of self-referent beliefs. In this socio-cognitive perspective, individuals are viewed as proactive and self-regulating, rather than reactive and controlled by

biological forces. Also in this view, individuals are understood to possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings and actions. Overall Bandura (2006) painted a portrait of human behaviour and motivation in which the beliefs that people have about their capabilities are critical elements. In fact, according to Bandura (2006), how people behave can often be better predicted by their beliefs than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing, for these self-perceptions help determine what individuals do with the knowledge and skills they have.

Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with people's beliefs in their capability to produce given attainments (Bandura, 2006:307). It is a judgment of capability to execute given types of performances. Perceived self-efficacy plays a key role in human functioning because it affects behaviour not only directly, but by its impact on other determinants such as goals and aspirations, outcome expectations and perceptions of impediments and opportunities in the social environment. Efficacy beliefs influence whether people choose to pursue the challenges and goals they set for themselves and their commitment to them, how much effort they put forth in given endeavours, the outcomes they expect their efforts to produce, how long they persevere in the face of obstacles, their resilience to adversity, the quality of their emotional life and how much stress and depression they experience in coping with taxing environmental demands, and the life choices they make and the accomplishments they realize (Bandura, 2006: 309).

The concept of self-efficacy has been used in education. Research has been done extensively in looking into teaching efficacy and on learning efficacy. Studies have been conducted on how teachers and learners perceive the school principal's leadership, but there are very few studies where school leaders evaluate themselves. Thus, the focus of this study was on how school principals perceive themselves in carrying out their duties as school leaders. The main purpose of this study is to assess the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals and its effect on their leadership efficacy and the school climate. In looking at assessing the leadership efficacy of the principals it is necessary to explain the sources of self-efficacy. This means focusing on how self-efficacy in individuals develops.

### 3.4 The sources of self-efficacy

#### Self-efficacy sources of Information



**Figure 3.2 (Redmond, 2015:1)**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, people's beliefs about their efficacy can be developed by four main sources of influence, namely, mastery experiences, social modelling or vicarious experiences, social or self-persuasion, and physiological responses (Bandura, 2006:309).

#### 3.4.1 Mastery experiences

Successful performance accomplishments provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can bring about success. In contrast, failure, especially if it occurs early in the learning experience, undermines one's sense of efficacy (Sewell & St George, 2009:60). Bandura (2006:310) agrees with Sewell and St George that success builds a robust belief in one's personal efficacy. Failure undermines it, especially if failure occurs before a sense of efficacy is firmly established. If people experience only easy successes they come to expect quick results and are easily discouraged by failure. A resilient sense of efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through perseverant effort. Some setbacks and difficulties in human pursuits serve a useful

purpose in teaching that success usually requires sustained effort. After people become convinced they have what it takes to succeed, they persevere in the face of adversity and quickly rebound from setbacks. By persevering through tough times, they emerge stronger from adversity.

### **3.4.2 Social modeling or vicarious experiences**

Vicarious experiences are made available by social models (Sewell & St George, 2009:60). Bandura (2006:3) states that seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises the observer's belief that he or she too possesses the capabilities to master comparable activities. By the same token, observing other's fail despite high effort lowers the observer's judgment of his or her own efficacy and undermines his or her efforts. The impact of modeling on perceived self-efficacy is strongly influenced by perceived similarity to the models. The greater the assumed similarity, the more persuasive are the models' successes and failures. If people see the models as very different from themselves, their perceived self-efficacy is not influenced by the models' behaviour and the results it produces. Modeling influences an observer to do more than provide a social standard against which to judge one's own capabilities. People seek proficient models who possess the competencies to which they aspire. Through their behaviour and expressed ways of thinking, competent models transmit knowledge and teach observers effective skills and strategies for managing environmental demands. Acquisition of better means raises perceived self-efficacy.

### **3.4.3 Social or self-persuasion**

People can be persuaded to believe that they have the skills and capabilities to succeed (Bandura in Cherry, 2010:2). People who are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master the given activities are likely to mobilize greater support and sustain it than if they harbour self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiencies when problems arise. To the extent that persuasive boosts in perceived self-efficacy lead people to try harder to succeed, they also promote the development of skills and a sense of personal efficacy. It is more difficult to instill high beliefs of personal efficacy by social persuasion alone than to undermine it. Unrealistic boosts

in efficacy are quickly disconfirmed by disappointing results of one's efforts. People who have been persuaded that they lack capabilities tend to avoid challenging activities that cultivate potentialities and give up quickly in the face of difficulties. Successful efficacy builders do more than convey positive appraisals. In addition to raising people's beliefs in their capabilities, they structure situations for them in ways that bring success and avoid placing people in situations prematurely where they are likely to fail more often (Bandura, 2006:3).

#### **3.4.4 Physiological responses**

Physiological and affective states refer to efficacy information gained from physiological and emotive reactions to a particular task (Labone, 2004:343). People also rely partly on their somatic and emotional state in judging their capabilities. They interpret their stress reaction and tension as signs of vulnerability to poor performance. In activities involving strength and stamina, people judge their fatigue, aches and pains as signs of physical incapacity. Mood also affects people's judgments of their personal efficacy. A positive mood enhances perceived self-efficacy; while a despondent mood diminishes it. It is not the sheer intensity of emotional and physical reactions that is important, but rather how they are perceived and interpreted. People who have a high sense of efficacy are likely to view their state of affective arousal as an energizing facilitator of performance, whereas those who are beset by self-doubt regard their arousal as a debilitator. Physiological indicators of efficacy play an influential role in one's perception of self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006:4).

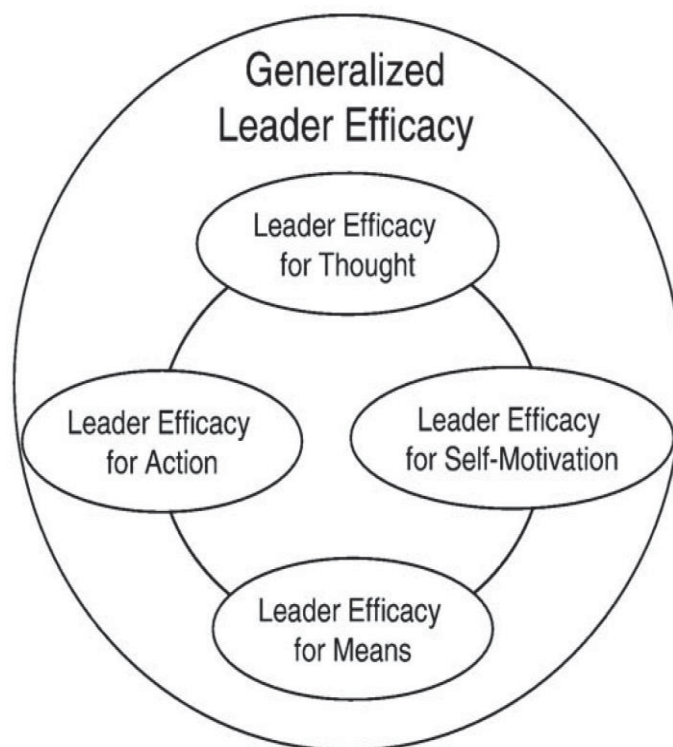
In my view these four sources are major determinants of a person's self-efficacy, which might be high or low.

The next section focuses on leadership efficacy.

### 3.5 Leadership efficacy

#### 3.5.1 What is leadership efficacy?

Figure 3.4.1 below shows generalized leader efficacy. Leader efficacy has an effect on different aspects of leadership, that is, leadership efficacy for thought, action and self-motivation, and leadership efficacy for means (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans & Harms, 2008:8). Feeling efficacious in these aspects of leadership will have a positive effect on the leadership practices of school principals.



**Figure 3.3 Generalized leader efficacy (Hannah; Avolio, Luthams and Harms, 2008:8)**

Leadership self-efficacy is a person's belief that he or she can exercise headship successfully and set a direction for teamwork and build relations with followers to gain their commitment to changing the goals (Paglis & Green in Villanueva & Sanches, 2007:350). Leadership efficacy is a specific form of efficacy associated with the level of confidence in the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with leading others. It can be clearly differentiated from confidence in the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with other social roles such as a teacher, that is, teacher efficacy, or a



statesman, that is, political efficacy (Hannah *et al.*, 2008:669). The aim of leadership is the achievement of goals; a strong and healthy sense of efficacy is necessary to sustain the productive attention to goals. Leadership self-efficacy has been related to direction-setting and to gaining followers' commitment, as well as in overcoming obstacles to change. Leaders' self-efficacy has been found to mediate employees' engagement with their work. Worker engagement occurs when the worker is cognitively vigilant and is emotionally connected to others to find meaning in his or her work (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:574).

Efficacy beliefs pertain to most task situations. However, for leaders such beliefs pertain not only to the leaders' accomplishments of particular tasks, but also to their perceived competence as leaders. In essence, leadership efficacy represents a leader's confidence in his or her ability to lead others to perform well and to help his or her group to succeed. Effective leadership requires a strong positive image and a sense that one can meet individual and group challenges. Often leaders pull their groups, organizations and nations through crises by displaying a strong sense of confidence and optimism (Goethals, Burns & Sorenson, 2004:412).

Leadership efficacy influences an individual's performance. High efficacious leaders set higher goals for themselves and their group, and establish more effective individual and group strategies for attaining these goals. Research has also indicated that the effects of leadership efficacy on behaviour and performance become even stronger in stressful and demanding circumstances (Goethals *et al.*, 2004:412).

Therefore, it is important to note that self-efficacy beliefs have direct effects on one's choice of activities and settings, and can affect coping efforts once those activities have begun. The stronger the self-efficacy beliefs, the longer the persistence. People who persist at subjectively threatening activities gain corrective experiences that further enhance their sense of efficacy. In sum, efficacy expectations are a major determinant of people's choice of activities, how much effort they will expend, and how long they will sustain their efforts in dealing with a stressful situation (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008:501).



The following section focuses on the influence the school principal has on the school climate.

### 3.5.2 School climate

Hoy and Miskel (in Oyetunji, 2006:72) define school climate as a relatively enduring quality of the whole school, which is experienced by the group, depicts their shared perceptions of behaviour, and influences their attitudes and behaviour in the school. Stover (in Khademfar & Idris, 2012) defines school climate as how learners and teachers feel about their school. Stover (*ibid.*) asserts that school climate is one of the clearest predictors of the educational success of a school.

A school climate is not a stagnant concept, but rather a continuously changing condition that needs to be monitored and cultivated. The principal as the school leader monitors the climate and adjusts processes and practices in order to keep the environment healthy (Fultz, 2011:66). According to Hoy and Sabo (in Oyetunji, 2006:13), a healthy or a positive school climate is related to the effectiveness of the school. This means that there is a connection between a positive school climate and the school's effectiveness.

A positive school climate is also linked to teacher job satisfaction and positive learner outcomes. Positive climates project warmth, belonging and collegiality. This type of environment promotes a safe, trusting and meaningful environment that encourages academic and personal growth and development (Fultz, 2011:68). The well-being of an employee is an important factor in determining the achievement of goals. The school climate is the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, that is, the educators and the learners. It affects their behaviour and is based on their collective perception of behaviour in schools. A positive school climate can enhance staff performance and promote higher morale, which will then contribute positively to the well-being of the educators. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well-functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult, if not impossible (Kelley *et al.*, 2005:19).

Alman (2010:9) is in agreement with Kelley *et al.* when he states that one perspective of employee well-being is considering employee attitudes over their job satisfaction “plus”. That is to say employee attitudes toward their roles, and the consequences of those attitudes. The “plus” refers to physical and mental health issues such as work-related stress. Employee surveys cover areas such as pay, benefits, interpersonal relations, participation in decision making, role design and work stress that cause dissatisfaction and unhealthy stress. Reasons for paying attention to employee satisfaction include the view that a positive organisational climate enhances motivation and increases the likelihood that employees will allocate discretionary effort to their work; it also assists in employee retention.

School principals have a critical role to play in schools. Their behaviours are believed to be central to the creation and facilitation of an effective teaching and learning environment within a school (Smith, Guarino & Olin, 2010:3). The role of the principal in creating an environment conducive to learning is very important. Principals especially are expected to make learning the centre of the organisation, to empower teachers, and to ensure that parents are involved in their child’s education (Khademfar & Idris, 2012: 218). Bouchamm, Basque and Marotte (2014:581) are in agreement with Smith *et al.* when they state that research has shown that principals play a pivotal role in improving classroom conditions. They also play a role in teacher supervision and student learning. This occurs through the influence they have on their teachers’ level of commitment and motivation, work conditions, and distributed power.

According to Kelley *et al.* (2010:19), researchers have related principals’ behaviours to the school climate. Indeed, the climate of a school can be shaped by the actions and behaviours of principals. The principals have the power, authority and position to impact the climate of the school. School climate is an important component to increasing the learners’ achievement in all schools. Khademfar and Idris (2012:218) state that the principal serves as a major catalyst in ensuring that the school climate is conducive to all learners.

The next section focuses on the impact the different leadership styles have on the school climate.

### **3.5.3 Leadership styles of principals and their impact on school climate**

A school's performance level rises or falls according to the principal's education, personality and style. A school's ability to attain success is determined by his or her ability to create a coalition towards raising the school's achievement as the school management tackles the challenges (Eberhard, 2013:45). Leading effectively will require leaders with an array of leadership styles. The most effective school leaders are able to lead. The traditions and beliefs surrounding leadership easily make a case that leadership is vital to effective education. Leaders must align their individual leadership style to reflect the needs and expectations of the organisation (Lewandowski, 2005:34).

Oyetunji (2006:13) states that it is possible to create a noticeable change in the climate of an organisation within a short period of time by varying the leadership style. He indicates that the implication of this is that leadership styles dictate organizational climate. Fultz (2011:65) agrees with Oyetunji that the leadership style used by leaders influences the organisational climate when he states that the school climate is directly impacted by the leadership practices of the principal. The principal's ability to motivate the staff and to facilitate the development of quality instructional practices impacts the success of the learners. Principals are responsible for maintaining a climate that is collegial, interactive and focused on supporting the teachers and the learners throughout the educational process.

The different leadership styles which have an impact on the school climate that are to be discussed include transformational leadership and instructional leadership.

#### **3.5.3.1 Transformational leadership and school climate**

Bass (in Demir, 2008:94) specifies that transformational leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest to the good of the group. The transformational leader articulates the vision in a clear and appealing manner, explains how to attain the vision, acts confidently and optimistically, expresses

confidence in the followers, emphasizes values with symbolic actions, leads by example, and empowers followers to achieve the vision. In essence, transformational leadership is a process of building commitment to organisational objectives and then empowering followers to accomplish those objectives.

Leadership is considered a key determinant of organisational commitment. Researchers interested in charismatic leadership behaviour have also suggested that such leaders enhance followers' identification with the leader, and their identification with and attachment to the group or organisation. Therefore, transformational leaders create high levels of organisational commitment (Strauss *et al.*, 2009:283). Transformational leadership also motivates employees to go beyond standard expectations by transforming followers' attitudes, beliefs and values, as opposed to simply gaining compliance. One reason transformational leadership can increase performance is because of its impact on behaviour. Research suggests that transformational leaders increase the follower's self-efficacy (Strauss *et al.*, 2009:283).

Farahani *et al.* (2011: 212) are in agreement with Strauss *et al.* when they state that transformational leadership is capable of encouraging followers to do more than expected. Organisations with transformational leadership cultures tend to be more effective, for example by being better able to adapt to change, transformational leadership is related to employees' perceptions of effectiveness. Satisfaction with a leader enhanced motivation, and led to better job performance and greater job satisfaction, greater innovative work behaviour, and greater involvement with a work team.

Transformational leadership should fuse the leader's vision so strongly in the follower that both are motivated by high morale and ethical principles. In addition, transformational leadership requires four interrelated components, namely, idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Ryan, 2007:43). There is a broad support for the positive effect of transformational leadership on employees' confidence to successfully perform particular tasks. In fact, there is empirical evidence that leaders affect their followers' performance. Eden (in Strauss *et al.*, 2009:283) found that followers' increased confidence in their ability to

perform mediates the effect of leaders' expressions of high expectations on followers' efforts and achievements.

### **3.5.3.2 Instructional leadership**

#### *Defining instructional leadership*

According to Calik, Sezzin, Kavgaci and Kilinc (2012), principals are expected to carry out many duties at their schools. One of these duties is instructional leadership. According to Sindhvad (2009:16), instructional leadership refers to a series of behaviours designed to affect classroom instruction. Such behaviours include principals informing teachers about new educational strategies and tools for effective instruction, and assisting them in critiquing them to determine their applicability in the classroom. Jantzi and Leithwood (in Chapman, 2009) define six dimensions of instructional leadership: identifying and articulating a vision, fostering acceptance of group goals, providing individualized support, providing intellectual stimulation, providing appropriate modeling or mentoring, and holding high performance expectations (Chapman, 2009:16).

Dareh and Ching-Jen (in Calik *et al.*, 2012:250) describe instructional leadership as the principal's behaviour affecting learning and teaching directly or indirectly. An efficient instructional leader, by providing an effective teaching and learning environment, would increase the quality of education in a school, move the school towards the ideal position, and increase student achievement. Instructional leadership encompasses "those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning". It comprises the following tasks: defining the purpose of schooling, setting school-wide goals, providing the resources needed for learning to occur, supervising and evaluating teachers, coordinating staff development programmes, and creating collegial relationships with and among teachers (Chell, 2013:13).

Andrews and Soder in (Sindhvad, 2009:17) describe the effective instructional leader as a resource provider, instructional resource, the communicator, and visibly present in the school. Blasé and Blasé (in Jenkins, 2009:36) cite specific behaviours of

instructional leadership such as making suggestions, giving feedback, modelling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and giving praise for effective teaching. The instructional leader also needs to have up-to-date knowledge on three areas of education: curriculum, instruction and assessment. The knowledge of the curriculum focuses on the principal's knowledge about the changing conceptions of curriculum, educational philosophies and beliefs, curricular sources and conflict, and curriculum evaluation and improvement. The instruction demands that a principal knows about the different models of teaching, the theoretical reasons for adopting a particular model, and the theories underlying the technology-based learning environments. Finally, assessment emphasises the principal's need to know about the principles of student assessment, assessment procedures with an emphasis on alternative assessment methods, and assessment methods, and assessment that aims to improve student learning (Jenkins, 2009:36).

### **3.5.3.3 Instructional leadership and school climate**

In an international survey conducted on instructional leadership and school climate, the findings were that in 17 countries, principals with higher levels of instructional leadership tended to work in schools that were reported to have a more positive school climate and were characterised by high levels of mutual respect. A number of studies from developed countries have examined the importance of the principal's role as the instructional leader, as well as the relationship between the principal's efforts in changing instructional practice to improve learner achievement Quins (in Sindhivad, 2009:17). Quins concluded that since principals are removed from the classroom, they can influence learner achievement indirectly by working through teachers.

According to Fancera (2009:3), as instructional leaders, principals can indirectly improve learner achievement by influencing other events that take place in their schools. Principals can improve the quality of their teachers through various means, including providing and supporting professional development opportunities, implementing teacher induction and retention programmes, supporting the pursuit of advanced degrees, and hiring the best candidates to fill vacancies. According to Linenburg (2010:8), school principals can use different means to change the

instructional practices of teachers. These means to improve teacher quality, however, are often district-level responsibilities, and the influence of building level leadership in this decision-making process varies among school districts. Regardless, principals with a vision to improve their school climate may begin with a focus on improving teacher quality. The first step would be to communicate high expectations to teachers and learners.

Effective school leaders communicate high expectations to both teachers and learners. School principals should also provide extended learning opportunities for learners. Principals who are instructional leaders monitor teacher interactions with all learners. They use various strategies to keep teachers and learners engaged and actively participating in the learning process and goal attainment. To promote a positive climate, instructional leaders should support activities that motivate learners, provide for meaningful learning opportunities, and involve all learners in school activities. Learners learn best in an exciting environment and effective instructional leaders provide a safe, orderly learning environment (Gizzard, 2007:17).

### **3.6 School principal efficacy**

A principal's self-efficacy is a judgement of his or her capabilities to structure a particular course of action that will lead towards the attainment of the school's goals. Bandura (in Nye, 2008) found that highly efficacious individuals tend to be more willing to create and implement a change initiative and have a more positive outlook on the outcome plan. The principal's sense of efficacy plays a critical role in meeting the expectations and demands of the position (Nye, 2008:3).

The principal's self-efficacy has the potential to contribute greatly towards his or her leadership success (Eberhard, 2013:45). Although empirical studies on principals' sense of efficacy are few, the results are enticing as self-efficacy beliefs are excellent predictors of individual behaviour. Principals with a strong sense of self-efficacy have been found to be persistent in pursuing their goals, but are also more flexible and more willing to adapt strategies to meet contextual conditions. This means self-efficacy beliefs are not static. The beliefs may be altered as a result of contextual factors (Lewandowski, 2005:19). Self-efficacy beliefs are also task and context-specific as



people do not feel equally efficacious in all situations. Principals may feel efficacious for leading in particular contexts, but this sense of efficacy may or may not transfer to other contexts, depending on the perceived similarities of the tasks (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:573).

Therefore, in making an efficacy judgement, consideration of the elements of the task at hand are required. In analyzing the task, the relative importance of factors that make leading difficult or act as constraints in a particular context are weighed against an assessment of the resources available that facilitate leadership. In assessing self-perceptions of competence, the principal assesses personal capabilities such as skills, knowledge, strategies or personality traits balanced against personal weaknesses or liabilities in this particular school setting. The interaction of these two components leads to judgments about self-efficacy for leadership in a particular school context (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007:574).

According to Imants and Brabander (1996), it was found that perceived self-efficacy was positively related to the effective use of analytic strategies for discovering optimal managerial rules. Both sense of efficacy and the use of analytic strategies contributed to managerial success in raising organizational performance (Imants & Brabander, 1996:182). These findings suggest that a principal's perceived self-efficacy might be an important factor in school effectiveness and school improvement. Rice (2010:3) is in agreement with Imants and Brabander when she states that the principal's sense of efficacy at the various kinds of tasks makes them effective. Ozer (2013:683) further states that a principal's sense of efficacy directly or indirectly affects the efficacy of teaching-learning activities by affecting the principal's goals, efforts and level of resistance when faced by challenges.

When faced with obstacles or setbacks those principals with a strong belief in their capabilities will redouble their efforts to master the challenge. Efficacious school leaders possess qualities that allow them to be more persistent in pursuing their goals. However, efficacious leaders are also pragmatic in the sense that they adapt strategies to the present context so that they do not waste time on unsuccessful strategies. When confronting problems, efficacious principals interpret failure as a lack of effort, or application of an incorrect strategy, rather than a lack of skill.



Principals with high levels of efficacy believe that by doubling their efforts or changing their strategy, they will realize success (Versland, 2009:60-66). According to Ozer (2013:683) school principals with a strong sense of efficacy are more determined in achieving their goals, more flexible and willing to adapt to changing situations, and they use intrinsic types of powers rather than coercive forces. Eberhad (2013:45), even goes further and states that these leaders believe in their ability to inspire positive change and to motivate others to assume greater responsibility in their schools' decision-making processes.

In contrast, individuals suspicious about their own capabilities decrease their efforts and level of resistance, and give up or find ordinary solutions in the face of challenges, troubles and failure (Ozer, 2013:683). School principals with a low sense of self-efficacy have been found to perceive an inability to control the environment as failure. They tend to be less likely to identify appropriate strategies or modify unsuccessful ones. When confronted with failure, they rigidly persist in their original course of action. When challenged, they are likely to blame others. Low self-efficacy principals are unable to see opportunities, to adapt, or develop support. They demonstrate anxiety, stress and frustration and are quick to call themselves a failure. Those with a low sense of self-efficacy are more likely to rely on external and institutional bases of power, such as coercive, positional and reward power (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007). They also rely more on transactional leadership style practices. This leads to lower motivation and achievement for the entire school community (Eberhad, 2013:45).

Versland (2009:66) is in agreement with Tschannen-Moran and Gareis. She states that leaders who possess low levels of self-efficacy tend to lower goals for their organisations, if indeed they set goals. Rather than adapt to difficult conditions, inefficacious principals tend to rigidly maintain the same course of action, even if evidence suggests the need for change. Inefficacious principals regard failure as a result of something beyond their control. They frequently blame other people or external conditions for failure or low performance. In a school setting, low efficacy principals are slow to implement new programmes or try new strategies because they have adopted the idea that since they cannot change certain conditions there is little use in trying something new.

It has been mentioned that principals face a number of challenges and responsibilities attached to their position of principal-ship. The way in which they deal with these challenges has an impact on their perceived sense of efficacy. It is necessary to discuss these challenges, which include discipline problems in schools, the workload of principals, the influence of political and social change, and financial management.

### **3.7 Factors affecting leadership efficacy of school principals**

In the traditional school model the role of the school principal was viewed as that of a manager or administrator. Traditionally, principals had more managerial and administrative tasks, and less teaching duties. The description of the principal's role included that of head educator and instructional leader. Both roles presumed a person who is knowledgeable in the field of learning and teaching, which implied a principal as teaching expert. However, the role of the principal has changed (Engelbrecht, 2009:19).

Today's leaders face unprecedented challenges as organizations struggle to adapt to ever-accelerated rates of change both internally and to the external environment in which they are embedded. Such challenges demand not only the knowledge, skills and abilities of leaders, but perhaps more importantly, the self-conceptualization of their leadership capabilities and the psychological resources to meet the ever-increasing demands of their roles (Hannah *et al.*, 2008:669).

Hannah *et al.* (2008:669) argue that the current conditions require leaders to continually step up to meet complex challenges and to have the requisite agency to positively influence their followers and the organization's culture, climate and performance. To mobilise groups towards collective performance, leaders have to both exercise high levels of personal agency and create similar levels of agency in the individuals they lead.

Allie (2014:5) agrees that the task of the school principal is complex as she states that school principals are faced with a wide range of challenges and demands. Allie further states that principals have to establish a culture of teaching and learning in their schools, improve and maintain high standards of education, working more closely

with parents, coping with multicultural learners, managing change and conflict, coping with limited resources, and ensuring more accountability to the community they serve.

Below we examine some of these challenges which influence the principal's sense of efficacy. These challenges can be attributed to factors inside and outside the school.

### **3.7.1 Factors outside the school**

#### ***Political changes***

The dramatic changes in the educational landscape in South Africa have produced major challenges for school leaders and managers (Moloi, 2007). Masitsa (in Engelbrecht, 2009) remarks that the political and social changes which have taken place over the last ten years have had a significant impact on schools in particular, and on education in general. The changing education environment changes the task of principals in many ways, which in turn demands new skills which are needed for the job if principals are to keep pace with ongoing developments. Unless principals are familiar with the dynamics of change, they will not survive. To keep up, principals need skills that will enable them to be flexible and adaptable so that they are able to accommodate legally-instituted changes, as well as change in general (Engelbrecht, 2009:19).

#### ***Education reform***

Education reforms are accompanied by increased responsibilities and accountability for everyone working in schools, including principals (Yu-kwong & Walker, 2010:1). In recent years, a number of high-profile education reformers and organizations have developed comprehensive, replicable models of curriculum and instruction that are meant to transform the entire school. Dozens of models are available and principals will be required to sift through the host of reforms in order to find those that are most beneficial and specifically designed to effect positive change in the school system. In the next few years, more and more principals and school districts will be shopping for the best model for their districts. Faced by the fact that although society may have reached consensus on the need for more challenging standards, or for improvement

in teacher education, the reform world is divided by fundamental disagreement. There are important differences of opinion on such pedagogical issues as learning styles, issues of value, what is meant by an educated citizen, and what children are being educated for (Cornelius & Cornelius, 2013:3).

### ***Social problems***

The community presents a number of challenges to the principal and staff. The inability of families to access resources is an ongoing problem. The principal sees the inability of many parents to effectively carry out the role expected of a good parent as a major challenge in its impact on students' level of achievement. Poverty is clearly a challenge for some families and this influences the way teachers go about their work. Other challenges within the community include households with low educational qualifications, houses with large numbers of people, and households with many health issues. All these factors have an impact on the learners' performance at school (Notman *et al.*, 2009:2).

According to Allie (2014:70), school principals must deal with these social problems. Some of the learners in their schools come from a poor community in which parents are not employed. The social impact of this is that the school fees are not often paid. This limits the resources of the school. Allie further argues that other social issues which include drug abuse and violence have a major impact on the school being effective. These social issues are consequently transferred to the school, and become a challenge to the school principals.

#### **3.7.2 School factors**

The organizational context in which a leader works is an important influence on what he or she can do. The contextual characteristics of an organization can influence the leader's sense of efficacy (Sindhvad, 2009:22). Principals are required to be aware of and understand environmental demands, and have the ability to respond to access to the school, and manage learning in a safe, diverse, integrated and challenging school environment (Scott, 2010:11).

## ***Classroom factors***

Discipline and the lack of a culture of teaching and learning are challenges experienced in schools and by teachers in their classrooms. The issue of learner discipline is one of the major problems in schools. There is a relationship between the learner learning and an orderly environment (Moloi, 2007:472). The more time teachers and principals spend on discipline, the less time is available for instruction. Learners are also less likely to focus on learning when they do not feel safe in school; while a lack of discipline constitutes an obstacle to learning (Duke *et al.*, 2007:10).

## ***Teachers***

There is a general consensus that teacher reliability and punctuality are problems that contribute to a weak culture of teaching and learning and are likely to impact negatively on learner attitude and discipline (Moloi, 2007:472). Another challenge linked to teachers is the lack of teamwork as they are accustomed to working in isolation. It is however unclear whether teachers simply prefer to work alone or whether no organized effort is made to develop teams. Infrastructure refers to the organizational arrangements, such as teams, committees and planning processes, that enable a school to accomplish its business efficiently and effectively. If teachers are working in isolation, it may be due to the absence of structured, formal opportunities for collaboration. Such opportunities may include leadership teams, school improvement groups, grade-level teams, subject matter teams, and staff committees devoted to identifying and assisting struggling students (Duke *et al.*, 2007:12).

Teacher support is strongly correlated with the principal's sense of self-efficacy. Because leaders rely on subordinates to help accomplish goals, their skills, abilities and the other performance characteristics are significant factors in leadership. The interpersonal support principals receive from school personnel, learners and parents play a significant role in shaping the principal's sense of efficacy (Sindhvad, 2009:23).

### ***Lack of resources***

Achieving goals in schools requires resources in the form of personnel, equipment, funding and time. Lack of resources can be a serious obstacle in a leader's path to accomplish improvements in education. A leader's self-efficacy for successfully leading a school may be diminished if resources are viewed as inadequate for supporting his or her efforts (Sindhvad, 2009:22).

### ***Dysfunctional school culture***

Rampa (in Engelbrecht, 2009:5) defines dysfunctional schools as schools that have no resilience in the sense that they cannot survive or recover from extreme adversity. A number of factors may be the cause of the dysfunctionality of schools. Common features of dysfunctional schools include disputed and disrupted authority relations between principals, educators and learners. This is caused by the absence of school governing bodies and school management teams, as well as acting principals with no authority – all of which ultimately contribute to the poor functioning of schools and the breakdown of a culture of teaching and learning.

Schools frequently are characterized by distinctive cultures. These cultures are embodied in shared beliefs and common ways of addressing concerns. Low-performing schools have been described as having cultures of low expectations and defeatism, cultures in which educators devote more time to making excuses for inadequate student performance than to finding ways to improve the situation. Principals at times feel that the school culture presents a major obstacle to their improvement efforts (Duke *et al.*, 2007:10).

The view of the research on dysfunctional school culture is that this culture can be a challenge for principals who want their schools to promote a culture of teaching and learning. If a leader fails to achieve success in a school this can lead to a principal with a negative sense of leadership efficacy.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter explored various aspects relating to leadership and leadership efficacy. The focus was on the social cognitive theory and its relations to self-efficacy, self-efficacy, and different sources of self-efficacy, that is, performance outcomes, vicarious experiences, physiological feedback and verbal persuasion. The chapter also touched on leadership efficacy, the effect of transformational and instructional leadership styles on the school climate, the leadership efficacy of principals, as well as the factors affecting the leadership efficacy of principals.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, will provide information about the methodology which was used in this study.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher explains the methodology which was used in this study. In addition, the geographical area where this study was conducted, the population, as well as the sample of the study will be discussed. The instruments which were used to collect data will also be explained, including the methods that were implemented to maintain the validity and reliability of the instrument.

#### 4.2 Research design

A research design describes how the study was conducted. It summarises the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data was obtained. In other words, the research design indicates the general plan: how the research was set up, what happened to the subjects, and what methods of data collection were used. The purpose of the research design is to specify a plan for generating empirical evidence to be used to answer the research questions. The intent was to use a design that would result in drawing the most valid, credible conclusions from the answers to the research questions. Since there are many types of research designs, it is important to match the research questions to the appropriate design. The research design is a very important part of an investigation, since certain limitations and cautions in interpreting the results are related to each design, which then determines how the data can be analysed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:20).

Creswell (2014:3) identifies three research approaches - qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. He argues that the quantitative and qualitative research approaches should not be viewed as rigid, distinct categories, polar opposites or dichotomies. Instead they represent different ends of a continuum. A study may be more qualitative than quantitative, or vice versa. Mixed methods resides in the middle of this continuum because it incorporates elements of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches.



#### **4.2.1 Mixed methods**

The research approach used in this study was the mixed methods approach.

A mixed method is an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data; integrating the two forms of data and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2014:4). As a method it focuses on collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach in one (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:435).

Creswell (2014:4) further explains that the distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is framed in terms of using words (qualitative) rather than numbers (quantitative), or using closed-ended questions (quantitative hypotheses) rather than open-ended questions (qualitative interview questions).

In the mixed methods approach the researcher collects both numerical information and text information to answer the study research questions (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:434). The researcher chose this research method because, as stated by Denscombe (in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:22), the mixed methods approach can increase the accuracy of data, provide a more complete picture of the phenomenon under study than would be yielded by a single approach (that is, qualitative or quantitative research approach), thereby overcoming the weaknesses and biases of a single approach (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:22).

#### **4.2.2 Differences between the qualitative research approach and the quantitative research approach**

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:11) state that the terms quantitative and qualitative are used frequently to identify different modes of inquiry or approaches to research.

The terms can be defined on two level of discourse. At one level, they refer to distinctions about the nature of knowledge: how one understands the world and the ultimate purpose of the research. On another level, the terms refer to research methods - how data are collected and analyzed - and the types of generalizations and representations derived from the data. Purists suggest that quantitative and qualitative research methods are based on different assumptions about the world, the research purpose, research methods, prototypical studies, the researcher's role, and the importance of context in the study.

According to Creswell (2014:4) the qualitative research approach is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants' setting, data analysis inductively building from particular to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation. Quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured by instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures. The final written report has a set structure consisting of the introduction, the literature review, the theory, methods, results and discussion.

In the table below, McMillan and Schumacher provide a summary of the differences between the qualitative and quantitative research approaches:

**Table 4.1 Quantitative and qualitative research**

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Quantitative</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
Assumptions about the world	A single reality, i.e. measured by an instrument	Multiple realities, e.g. interviews with the principal, teachers and learners about a social situation
Research purpose	Establish relationships between measured variables	Understanding a social situation from participants' perspectives
Research methods	Procedures (sequential steps) are established before study begins	Flexible, changing strategies, design emerges as data are collected
Prototypical study (clearest example)	Experimental design to reduce error and bias	Ethnography using "disciplined subjectivity"
Research role	Detached with use of instruments	Prepared person becomes immersed in social situation
Importance of text	Goal of universal context-free generalisations	Goal of detailed context-bound summary statements

(McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:12)

### 4.3 The actual study design

This study followed the descriptive survey design. Descriptive research attempts to describe a group of people, a phenomenon, or an event. It is one of the first steps in understanding social problems and issues. It describes who is experiencing the problem, how widespread the problem is, and how long the problem has existed

(Salkind, 2010:1254). Stangor (2014:16) further explains descriptive research as describing the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individuals. Therefore, we can conclude that research designed to answer questions about the current state of affairs is known as descriptive research.

In survey research, the researcher selects a sample of respondents from a target population and administers a questionnaire or conducts an interview to collect information on variables of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:234). According to Creswell (2014:13), a survey provides a quantitative or numeric description of the trends, attitudes and opinions of a population by studying cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection with the intent of generalising from a sample to a population. Most surveys describe the incidence, frequency and distribution of the characteristics of an identified population. In addition to being descriptive, surveys can be used to explore relationships between variables, or in an explanatory way.

The researcher chose a survey because they are best suited when collecting data in a large population. The population of this study included all school principals in the Free State Province, which was a large population target of 100 principals. In this study, questions were formulated which focused on the principals' perceived leadership self-efficacy and its effect on their leadership practices.

#### **4.4 Population of the study**

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research. This group is also referred to as the target population or universe (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:129). The population for this study included all principals of secondary schools in the Free State Province of South Africa. The researcher chose the schools in the Free State Province because of accessibility, since the researcher is based in this province. The study was conducted in selected secondary and combined schools in the province.

Figure 4.1 below shows the map of South Africa. It indicates all nine provinces of South Africa. It includes the Free State Province, where this study was conducted.



**Figure 4.1 The map of South Africa**

According to the education statistics in South Africa published in 2015, the total number of secondary schools in the Free State Province is 241 and the total number of Combined Schools in the Free State Province is 233 (Department of Basic Education Statistics in South Africa, 2015:20). These figure includes Ordinary Secondary Schools, Comprehensive Secondary Schools, Agricultural Secondary Schools, and Combined Schools. According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2003:61), Comprehensive Schools are secondary schools with a full complement of Technical or Agricultural subjects. Agricultural Schools train students who are interested in a career in farming or related services. These may include plant cultivation, dealing with animals, or business and economics ([http://study.com/agriculture\\_schools](http://study.com/agriculture_schools)). Combined Schools are institutions offering a selection of grades between R and Grade 12 (The Department of Education Infrastructural National Assessment Report, 2007:13). Ordinary Secondary Schools are schools offering a lowest level of Grade 8 and a highest level of Grade 12. There are also institutions included in this group that offer only a selection of grades within these limits (The Department of Education Infrastructural National Assessment Report, 2007:13). Of all the school principals who participated in this study, only three

were principals in independent schools. The rest were heads of public schools. Furthermore school principals who participated in the study included heads from Agricultural schools, Comprehensive Secondary Schools, Ordinary Secondary Schools and Combined Schools. In the study five school principals were from Combined Schools, six from Comprehensive Secondary Schools, and the rest of the principals were heads of Ordinary secondary schools.

The distinctions between the different schools was done based on school type. It is also important to distinguish between Section 21, Partial Section 21 and Non-Section 21 schools. Section 21 schools are those schools that manage their own finances. The Department of Education deposits the school allocation into the school's account at the beginning of every financial year. This happens after the school has submitted an audited annual financial statement report ([www.kzneducation.gov.za](http://www.kzneducation.gov.za)). According to Mestry and Bischoff (2009:52), in Section 21 schools the resources or state's allocation is paid directly into the school's banking account. The School Governing Bodies of the schools are given powers to spend the resource allocation, usually prescribed by the Provincial Department of Education, on learning and teaching support materials, services, repairs and maintenance.

Non-section 21 schools are schools whose funds are controlled by the Department of Education on their behalf. In this case, each school receives an allocation letter informing the school of its allocation for the year. The school then purchases its needs following departmental procurement processes ([www.kzneducation.gov.za](http://www.kzneducation.gov.za)). Mestry and Bisschoff (2009:52) state that in Non Section 21 schools, the state allocation will not be deposited into the school's banking account, but they will receive a paper budget. The resource or state's allocation is managed and administered by the districts on behalf of the school. Schools may acquire the goods and services only from authorised suppliers determined by the Provincial Department of Education. They are required to fill in the necessary requisition forms and submit them to the Department who will then effect payment to the suppliers.

The study was conducted in the Free State Province. Figure 4.2 below shows the map of the Free State Province.



**Figure 4.2 The map of the Free State Province**

#### **4.5 Sample and the sampling procedure**

The total number of secondary schools in the Free State Province, including Combined Schools, is 474, that is, 241 secondary schools and 233 combined schools (Department of Basic Education, 2015:20). From this number, a sample of 100 secondary school principals was selected using cluster sampling. Cluster sampling is also called area or multistage sampling. Cluster sampling is often used in cases where the population is too large for random sampling. This type of sample is used when a sampling frame such as the list of names is not available, but only a map of the relevant geographical area. Cluster sampling is also employed when economic considerations and cluster criteria are significant for the study (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:434).



Using cluster sampling, the researcher selected 100 secondary schools. Questionnaires were then distributed to the principals. Some of the questionnaires were distributed personally by the researcher by delivering questionnaires to the principals, some were sent via e-mail, and some were distributed in meetings arranged by the officials of the Education Department. The researcher personally distributed questionnaires in areas in and around Bloemfontein as well as those questionnaires which were distributed in meetings. In areas that are further away from Bloemfontein, questionnaires were sent via e-mail to the school principals and collected personally by the researcher or former CUT students teaching in schools of the school principals who participated in the study. This was done with the permission of the District Directors from the Free State Department of Education. The researcher chose a geographically closed cluster. This method was such that all the schools in the Free State Province had an equal chance to be selected for the sample. In using cluster sampling, the researcher attempted to ensure that each cluster on its own represented the whole population.

#### **4.5.1 Sample**

De Vos *et al.* (2011:224) state that a sample comprises elements or a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurement drawn from a population in which we are interested. A sample is selected and studied in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn.

In quantitative studies, the group of subjects or participants from whom the data are collected is referred to as the sample. The sample can be selected from a larger group of persons, identified as a population, or can simply refer to the group of subjects from whom data are collected, even though the subjects are not selected from the population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:143).

The sample for this study included 84 school principals from 84 schools. These principals were from the five districts of the Free State Province. These districts include the Xhariep, Motheo, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyane and Fezile Dabi Districts.



The map below indicates the five districts of the Free State Province where the research was conducted. Each district is indicated clearly on the map. Mangaung in the map indicates the Motheo District:



**Figure 4.3 The five districts in the Free State Province**

## **4.6 Data collection instruments**

The main data collection instrument used by the researcher was a questionnaire. The questionnaires were followed by semi-structured interviews.

### **4.6.1 Questionnaires**

A questionnaire is a document containing questions and/or other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. Although the term questionnaire suggests a collection of questions, a typical questionnaire will probably

contain as many statements as questions, especially if the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which respondents hold a particular attitude or perspective (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:186). A questionnaire is relatively economical, has the same questions for all subjects, and can ensure anonymity. Questionnaires can use statements or questions, but in all cases the subject is responding to something written for a specific purpose (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:211).

The first consideration when deciding on using questionnaires is to decide whether the item will have a closed form, in which subjects choose between pre-determined responses, or an open form, in which the subjects write in any response they want. The choice of the form to use depends on the objective of the item and the advantages and disadvantages of each type. Closed-form, also called structured, selected response or close-ended questions are best for obtaining demographic and information that can be categorised easily. Open-ended items exert the least amount of control over the respondent and can capture idiosyncratic differences. If the purpose is to generate specific individual responses, the open-ended format is better, and if the purpose is to provide more general group responses, the closed form is preferred (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:211-214). This then means the choice of questions asked in the questionnaire depends on the purpose of the research.

The questionnaire which was used in this study was a structured questionnaire comprising both closed and open-ended questions. These questions offered the respondents the opportunity of selecting, according to instructions, one or more response choices from a number provided. According to De Vos *et al.* (2011:198), it is advantageous to use both closed and open-ended questions when a substantial amount of information about a subject exists and the response options are relatively known.

The questionnaire that was used in this study is the School Administrators' Efficacy Scale (SAES), developed by McCollum, Kajs and Minter (2006) in the United States of America. This scale was based on the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) national standards. It was a nine-point Likert scale and was revised and changed by the researcher to a seven-point Likert scale. The SAES was developed to address a large number of everyday tasks performed by many administrators or

school principals. The first step in developing the instrument, according to McCollum *et al.*, was writing items to address the ELCC standards. The items were worded to reflect confidence, beliefs about knowledge, and beliefs in one's ability, all of which are synonymous with efficacy related to being a school principal. The ELCC is made up of four school administrator organisations that include the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the American Association of School Administrator (AASA), the National Association Secondary School Principals (NASSP), and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). The purpose of the Council is to review university-based educational administration programmes that seek accreditation using national development standards developed by the National Policy Board for Education Administration. The SAES, as developed by McCollum *et al.*, has 56 items (McCollum *et al.*, 2006:5).

This **56** item SAES scale was adopted and adapted for use by the researcher to assess the levels of efficacy of school principals in the Free State Province. The reason this scale was adopted by the researcher is because the tasks of principals in South Africa are similar to those performed by principals elsewhere in the world. Some aspects of the scale were adapted by the researcher to ensure that the scale was suitable to the South African context. The scale assessed the leadership efficacy of school principals on eight dimensions of leadership, that is, instructional leadership and staff development, data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles, resource and facility management, use of community resources, communication in a diverse environment, and the development of a school vision. Rating scales are one way in which degrees of responses and the intensity of responses can be managed. The rating scale which was used in the questionnaire was the Likert scale. A Likert scale provides a range of responses to a given question or statement (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:386).

The respondents were requested to indicate their opinion on the questions in each dimension by ticking the appropriate box. The response mode used varied from one (1) which means “**not confident at all**”, to seven (7), which means “**very confident**”. The questions asked in the questionnaire required information, which ultimately led to the answers of the research questions in this study.

#### **4.6.1.1 Variables of the study**

A variable is the name or the label that represents a concept or a characteristic. This concept is a noun that describes a class of objects, whereas a characteristic describes a trait. Quantitative studies use a variable rather than a noun or characteristic because what is studied varies or has different values. Thus, a variable is a noun or characteristic, which represents numerical or categorical, in which subjects or objects are divided into mutually exclusive groups (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:64).

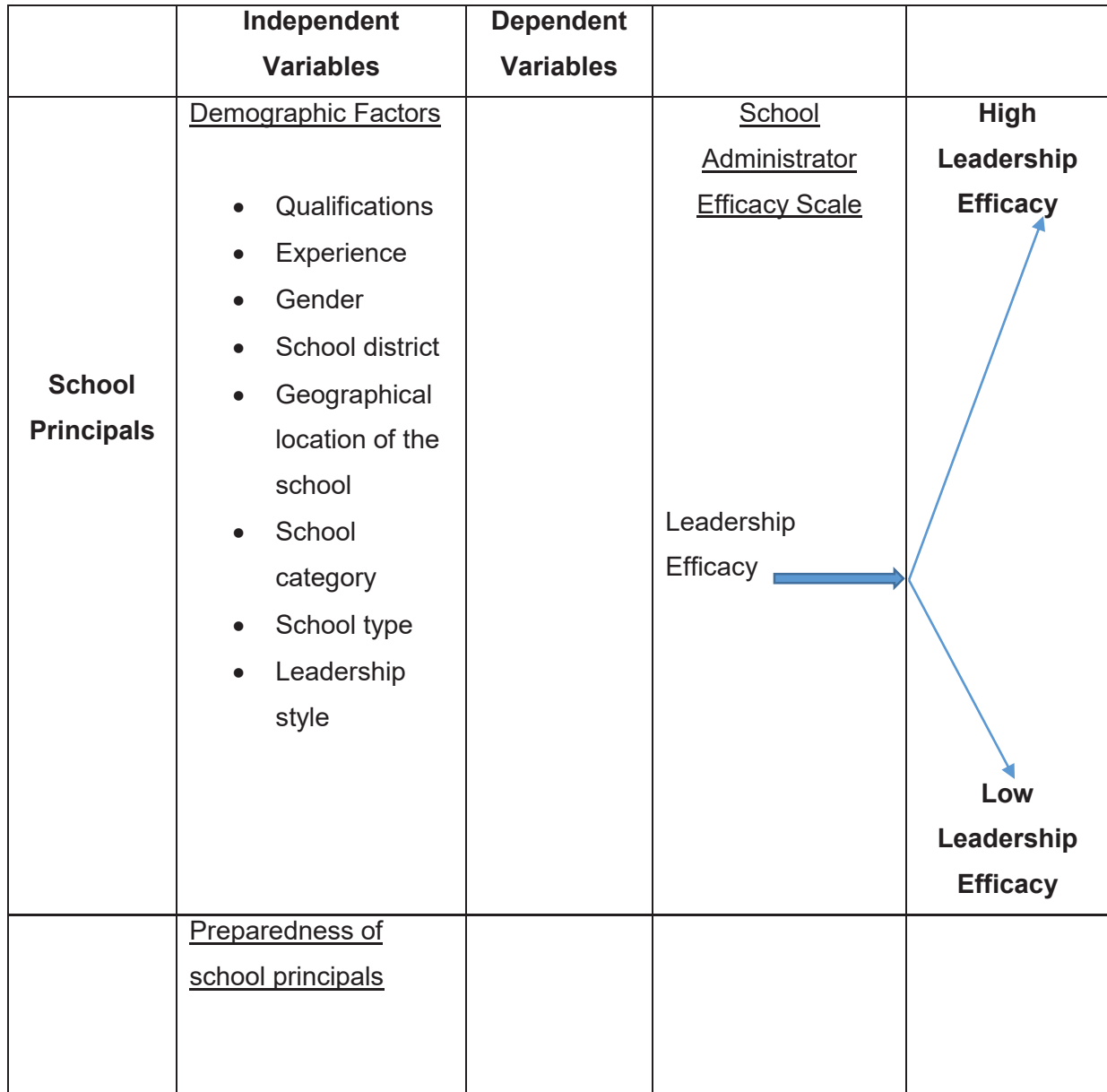
This study had both independent and dependent variables. Kaur (2013:36) states that an independent variable is the antecedent while the dependent variable is a consequent. He further argues that if the independent variable is an active variable, then we manipulate the values of the variable to study its effect on another variable. Barbie (2008:21) agrees with Kaur when he states that an independent variable is, therefore, presumed to cause or determine a dependent variable. Independent variables in this study include the qualifications of the principals, their experience, their gender, the school district, the geographical location of the school, the school category, the school type, their leadership style and the formal training received by them. These variables are classified as the independent variables because of their influence on the leadership efficacy of the principals, and consequently, on their leadership practices.

According to Kaur (2013:36), the dependent variable is the variable that is affected by the independent variable. In other words the change in this variable is caused by the introduction of an independent variable. Therefore according to Barbie (2008:21), a dependent variable is a variable assumed to depend on or is caused by another, called an independent variable. The dependent variable in this study is the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals.

The personal factors, the contextual factors, and the external factors are all independent variables. All these factors have an effect on the leadership efficacy of school principals. The leadership efficacy of the principals and their leadership practices are dependent variables because their personal factors, the contextual

factors and the external factors have an effect on their leadership efficacy, which in turn has an impact on their leadership practices.

The variables in this study are indicated in the figure below:



**Figure 4.4 Variables in the study**

#### 4.6.1.2 The reliability of the scale

According to Thyer (2010:356), reliability is concerned with the replicability and consistency of the findings. It refers to the degree to which other researchers performing a similar research would generate similar interpretations and results. McMillan & Schumacher (2014:195) agree with Thyer when they state that test

reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collection. Another way to conceptualise reliability is the extent to which measures are free from error. If an instrument has little error, then it is reliable, and if it has a great amount of error, then it is unreliable

The reliability analysis of the instrument used in this study was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha for each of the SAES subscales. The eight dimensions and their reliability co-efficients (Cronbach's Alpha), based on McCollum *et al's.*, are (1) Instructional Leadership and Staff Development (.93), (2) School Climate Development (.93), (3) Community Collaboration (.91), (4) Data-based Decision making Aligned with Legal and Ethical Principles, (5) Resource and Facility Management (.89), (6) Use of Community Resources (.95), (7) Communication in a Diverse Environment (.81), and (8) Development of School Vision (.86). These dimensions were derived through exploratory factor analysis. Hence, some evidence of construct validity exists. The content validity of the SAEC instrument comes from its base in the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) national standards. This scale is young, but given its initial validity and reliability evidence there is promise that the research conducted in this current study will lead to clear construct validity evidence, thereby furthering the measurement of school administrator efficacy (McCollum, Kajs & Minter, 2006:5).

Since the researcher modified the questionnaire and also added open-ended questions, the reliability of the questionnaire had to be checked again to ensure that the results obtained from this study would be reliable. The researcher requested the statisticians to verify the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha. This is explained in the next section on reliabilities for subscales and questions. The reliability of the scale is explained for each subscale. The statisticians indicated that the deletion of some of the items (items highlighted in yellow) would increase the reliability of the instrument.

#### 4.6.1.3 Reliability for subscales and questions in the actual study

The reliability of the instrument was checked. The following tables indicate the reliability of the scale in each dimension.

#### Instructional leadership and staff development

##### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.942	.944	13

**Table 4.2 Reliability Statistics – Instructional Leadership and Staff Development**

##### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item -Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q1	64.39	98.443	.665	.577	.939
Q2	64.54	96.935	.731	.676	.937
Q3	64.53	94.936	.708	.615	.938
Q4	64.36	96.386	.742	.626	.936
Q5	64.26	97.082	.720	.644	.937
Q6	64.03	98.126	.750	.688	.937
Q7	64.33	94.349	.815	.740	.934
Q8	64.53	96.658	.743	.701	.936
Q9	64.34	96.378	.782	.670	.935
Q10	64.40	95.154	.771	.722	.936
Q11	64.20	96.314	.794	.691	.935
Q12	64.93	96.501	.576	.513	.943
Q13	64.19	97.977	.648	.538	.939

**Table 4.3 Item - Total Statistics - Instructional Leadership and Staff Development**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.942). Deletion of one of the items (Q12) would slightly increase the reliability to 0.943.

## School climate development

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.932	.933	7

**Table 4.4 Reliability Statistics – School Climate Development**

### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q14	32.12	28.180	.734	.584	.925
Q15	32.01	28.866	.705	.522	.928
Q16	31.82	28.150	.807	.679	.919
Q17	31.87	28.458	.744	.671	.924
Q18	31.80	27.311	.860	.786	.913
Q19	31.86	28.101	.842	.749	.916
Q20	31.98	26.512	.789	.675	.921

**Table 4.5 Item - Total Statistics - School Climate Development**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.932). None of the items, if deleted, would lead to an increase in the alpha coefficient.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable.



## Community collaboration

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.949	.949	7

**Table 4.6 Reliability Statistics - Community Collaboration**

### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q21	28.54	44.733	.772	.695	.945
Q22	28.68	42.728	.874	.826	.936
Q23	28.68	40.931	.858	.862	.938
Q24	28.80	42.365	.897	.892	.935
Q25	28.81	42.104	.865	.785	.937
Q26	27.90	45.256	.738	.632	.948
Q27	28.25	44.165	.785	.701	.944

**Table 4.7 Item - Total Statistics - Community Collaboration**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.949). None of the items, if deleted, would lead to an increase in the alpha coefficient.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable

## Data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.947	.947	8

**Table 4.8 Reliability Statistics – Data-based Decision-making Aligned**

### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q28	38.63	35.651	.757	.712	.943
Q29	38.36	35.038	.876	.810	.935
Q30	38.55	34.909	.843	.768	.937
Q31	38.51	35.570	.794	.696	.940
Q32	38.89	34.830	.793	.689	.940
Q33	38.55	34.713	.791	.760	.940
Q34	38.80	34.287	.834	.736	.937
Q35	38.47	36.496	.759	.713	.942

**Table 4.9 Item - Total Statistics - Data-based Decision-making Aligned**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.947). None of the items, if deleted, would lead to an increase in the alpha coefficient.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable.

## Resource and facility management

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.910	.910	5

**Table 4.10 Reliability Statistics – Resource and Facility Management**

### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q36	20.86	15.883	.669	.508	.910
Q37	20.80	14.838	.780	.668	.889
Q38	20.88	14.154	.821	.705	.880
Q39	20.64	14.449	.794	.708	.886
Q40	20.77	14.587	.799	.695	.885

**Table 4.11 Item - Total Statistics - Resource and Facility Management**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.910). None of the items, if deleted, would lead to an increase in the alpha coefficient.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable.

## Community resources

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.953	.954	3

**Table 4.12 Reliability Statistics – Community Resources  
Item - Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q41	9.81	6.807	.863	.751	.961
Q42	9.94	6.008	.935	.882	.906
Q43	9.80	5.971	.912	.859	.924

**Table 4.13 Item - Total Statistics - Community Resources**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.953). Deletion of one of the items (Q41) would increase the reliability to 0.961.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable.

## Communication in a diverse environment

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.924	.924	5

**Table 4.14 Reliability Statistics – Communication in a diverse environment**

### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q44	23.27	11.783	.744	.566	.917
Q45	23.04	11.011	.857	.736	.896
Q46	23.27	10.831	.825	.729	.902
Q47	23.17	10.288	.862	.774	.894
Q48	23.22	11.562	.727	.548	.921

**Table 4.15 Item - Total Statistics - Communication in a diverse environment**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.924).

None of the items, if deleted, would lead to an increase in the alpha coefficient.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable.

## Development of a school vision

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.942	.944	4

**Table 4.16 Reliability Statistics – Development of a school vision**

### Item - Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q49	16.85	9.409	.883	.823	.921
Q50	16.86	8.702	.916	.846	.907
Q51	16.88	8.347	.886	.807	.918
Q52	16.85	9.265	.778	.631	.951

**Table 4.17 Item - Total Statistics - Development of a School Vision**

This subscale showed high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha=0.942). Deletion of one of the items (Q52) would increase the reliability to 0.951.

This means that the instrument in this subscale was reliable.

The next section focuses on the validity of the instrument.

### 4.6.1.4 The validity of the scale

Validity is concerned with the accuracy of the findings. It addresses whether the researcher sees what he or she thinks he or she sees (Thyer, 2010:362). The validity of the efficacy scale used in this study is very important. According to the researcher when we measure something with an instrument, the instrument we use to measure the variable must measure that which it is supposed to measure. Given the fact that efficacy is an understudied construct in the domain of school administration, a need exists to develop high quality instruments to measure the construct, as well as to study the construct further using such instrumentation. Establishing the validity measurement instrument is a key process in the development of good instrumentation.

The validity of the instrument used in this study was supported by literature. Benson (in McCollum *et al.*, 2006) offers three stages of construct validation: (1) substantive, (2) structural, and (3) external. In the substantive stage, constructs are theorised and defined. In the structural stage, relationships among variables purported to measure the construct are sought. Such techniques as exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency measures (e.g. Cronbach's Alpha) are utilised. The content validity of the SAES instrument comes from its base in the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) national standards. This scale is young, but given its initial validity and reliability evidence, there is promise that the research conducted in this current study will lead to clear construct validity evidence, thereby, furthering the measurement of school administrator efficacy (McCollum *et al.*, 2006:4).

#### **4.6.2 Interviews**

An interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:409). The most obvious difference between an interview and a questionnaire is in the way the data are gathered. In-depth interviews use open-response questions to obtain data on participant's meanings, in other words, how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or make sense of the important events in their lives (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:380). Interviews were conducted following the responses received from the questionnaires which were completed by the principals. The information from the interviews was used to probe further the responses of the principals, and to supplement information received from the questionnaires where the researcher identified gaps in the study. Twenty school principals who were part of the main study were interviewed.

The type of interviews which were used in this study were semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are defined as those organised around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth (De Vos *et al.*, 2011: 349). Semi-structured questions have no choices from which the respondent selects an answer. Rather, the question is phrased to allow for individual responses. It is an open-ended question, but is fairly specific in its intent (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:206).

The respondents which were interviewed were the principals of secondary schools who were completed question of the actual study in the Free State Province. The principals were selected using convenient sampling. In convenience sampling a group of subjects is selected on the basis of being accessible and expedient (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:151). The total number of principals interviewed was 20 and their schools were selected based on convenience. The majority of school principals, that is 14, were from the Motheo District, four were from the Xhariep District, one from the Fezile Dabi District, and one from the Lejweleputswa District. The principals were either interviewed personally by the researcher in their schools, or telephonically. Prior arrangements were made to interview the principals. The duration of an interview was between 20 and 45 minutes, depending on the responses of the principal. Recording of interview responses was done by transcribing or writing down the verbatim responses of the principals as they responded to the questions.

The next section examines the data collection procedure.

## **4.7 Data collection procedure**

The data collection procedure focuses on aspects involving requesting permission to gain access to the institutions where the research was conducted, the pilot study, and the actual study.

### **4.7.1 Gaining access**

Researchers cannot expect access to schools, colleges, or universities as a matter of right. Thus, requesting permission to gain access to these institutions where research will be conducted is important and it involves applying for official permission to undertake one's research in the target community. This will mean contacting, in person or in writing, an appropriate official who will grant the permission to conduct the research. It is important to gain access early on in the study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:81). The researcher requested permission from the officials of the Department of Education to gain access to the schools for the purpose of conducting research.



The main study was preceded by the pilot study. Before proceeding with the pilot study, the researcher requested permission to conduct research from the Free State Department of Education. A letter, which requested permission to conduct research in secondary schools in the Free State Province, was delivered by the researcher by hand to the offices of the Free State Department of Education in February 2014 (see Appendix A). The Departmental officials gave the researcher a form that had to be completed before permission to conduct research could be granted. The officials also requested a letter from the researcher's Supervisor confirming that the researcher had been given approval to conduct research by the Central University of Technology, Free State. The form from the Free State Department of Education was completed by the researcher and submitted together with the letter requested from the Supervisor (see Appendix B). Letters requesting permission to enter the school premises were also given to the officials in the Free State Department of Education. After a period of between two and three weeks the Free State Department of Education sent a letter giving approval to the researcher to conduct research in the schools in the Free State Province (Appendix C). The letter of approval granted permission to the researcher to conduct research in the Free State Province only, and highlighted important ethical aspects which the researcher had to adhere to whilst conducting research.

#### **4.7.2 The pilot study**

A pilot is a procedure for testing and validating an instrument by administering it to a small group of participants from the intended test population. Pretesting a measuring instrument consists of carrying out all aspects of the total data collection process on a small scale. The pilot study helps the researcher to fine-tune and debug the process for a smooth main inquiry. It can be viewed as the dress rehearsal of the main investigation and is similar to the researcher's planned investigation (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:237). A pilot study is necessary for the proper development of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was piloted as it is important to ensure that it is pre-tested before it is distributed on a large scale. Pre-testing the questionnaire is important to determine the success of the questionnaire (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:402).

According to White (2005:129), before the questions are put in their final form, a pilot study should be carried out in order to eliminate any ambiguities in the phrasing or

choice of words. That is, the wording of a question should not influence the respondent in a certain direction. For this reason, stereotyped, prestige-carrying, or emotionally loaded words should be avoided. The questionnaires were administered at the beginning of May 2014 to a small number of secondary school principals in the Motheo District. The school principals who were used in the pilot were not included in the main study. So, the school principals who participated in the pilot, were not part of the 84 school principals who participated in the actual study. The aim of the pilot study was to check the clarity of the questionnaire items and instructions, and to gain feedback on the validity of the questionnaire items. Another aim of piloting the questionnaire was to eliminate ambiguities or difficulties in the wording and to check whether the questionnaire was too long or too short, too easy to understand or too difficult, too threatening, too intrusive or too offensive. The analysis of the pilot study provided the means for checking the suitability and the relevance of the questions and gave the researcher an idea about the type of data that was likely to emerge from the main study (White, 2005:129). As a result of such analysis, the items for removal were identified, and this then resulted in a questionnaire of manageable proportions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:402).

A pilot study was conducted in 12 Secondary Schools in the Motheo District. The researcher administered 19 questionnaires to secondary school principals in the Motheo District. The total number of questionnaires that were returned by the principals was 12. The researcher started the pilot study on 6 May 2014, and it ran until 31 May 2014. Appointments to administer questionnaires for a pilot were made telephonically in advance in some secondary schools, while in others the appointments were arranged by visiting the schools personally. The procedure followed by the researcher when making appointments telephonically was as follows: the principals were called, the researcher then introduced herself to the school principal, explained the purpose of the research to them and requested their assistance in the completion of a questionnaire, as well as permission to deliver the questionnaires to the school. The pilot study gave the researcher an indication of the adjustments which had to be done on the questionnaire. As a result of the pilot, the questionnaire was revised and certain questions in different sections of the questionnaire changed. Hence, the researcher requested that the reliability of the questionnaire be checked again.

#### ***4.7.2.1 Changes made to the questionnaire after the pilot study***

The questionnaire administered during the pilot study was a nine-point scale; after the pilot it was reduced to a seven-point scale.

The section on the qualifications in the biographical data was changed from “Your Qualifications” during the pilot to “Your Highest Qualification” in the actual study. This was done because most principals have more than one degree and we could not ask them to list all their qualifications, hence they had to indicate their highest qualification.

The term “School administrator” used in the original questionnaire was changed to “school principal” to make the questionnaire more applicable to the South African context. In South Africa, school managers or school leaders are referred to as school principals.

The question, “What other factors would you see as affecting your leadership practices?”. was changed due to the inputs of some of the principals during the pilot. This question was broken down into three questions. These questions requested principals to indicate contextual, external and personal factors affecting their leadership practices.

In the section on biographical data, information on the school type was also revised. In the questionnaire, Combined Schools were not included. This category had to be included in the questionnaire to accommodate principals in Combined Schools.

#### ***4.7.2.2 Challenges encountered during the pilot study***

The majority of the principals were positive and did their best to assist with the completion of questionnaires; however, there were some challenges. The challenges experienced by the researcher included the following:

- The first challenge encountered by the researcher was to convince some of the school principals who were not keen to participate in the study, to participate.

- Some school principals indicated that as principals they were too busy and could not participate in the study.
- Others indicated that the research conducted by researchers in the past in their schools had no impact on them personally as participants. Therefore they were not keen to participate in the research as it would not have an impact in their schools. They would like to see how research would positively impact on them in their performance of their duties.
- In a religious school, the researcher discovered that when on the school premises of the school, even if you were a guest, one had to observe the religious practices of the school.
- In some schools the researcher made appointments to meet with the principals, but when she arrived at the school the principals would not be available or would not be there due to other commitments as principals.

#### 4.7.3 Actual study

In the actual study the researcher distributed a total of 100 questionnaires to different secondary schools. From the 100 questionnaires that were distributed in schools in the five districts of the Free State Province, 84 questionnaires were returned. That means the response rate is 84%. From the 84 participants, 13 (15.5%) were female and 71 (84.5%) were male, thus the vast majority of the participants were male school principals. This clearly shows that principal-ship in South Africa is dominated by males.

This information on the gender of the respondents is presented in the following table:

	Frequency	Percent
Male	71	84.5
Female	13	15.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.18 Gender of Respondents**

The questionnaires were distributed to the five districts in the Free State Province. The school principals in the Motheo District, the Lejweleputswa District, and the Fezile

Dabi District were given between one and two weeks to complete the questionnaires, depending on their schedules. The researcher collected the questionnaires personally from the different schools, except for the schools in Parys, which is in the Fezile Dabi District. In these schools the researcher requested former students, who are now teachers in Parys, to collect the questionnaires in these four schools. In all the schools where the researcher collected data, prior arrangements were made with the principals, either telephonically or via e-mail.

The questionnaires received from the school principals in the Xhariep and the Thabo Mofutsanyane District were distributed during the district meetings organised by the Departmental officials for school principals. Permission to administer the questionnaire during these meetings was requested from the Departmental officials responsible for these two districts prior to the meetings. In these meetings the researcher was given an opportunity to explain the purpose of the research and requested the assistance of school principals in the completion of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were completed by the school principals and given to the researcher immediately after completion. These two districts are the only districts where the questionnaires were distributed, completed and immediately given to the researcher.

The table below indicates the number of questionnaires distributed in each district and the number of questionnaires received by the researcher.

<b>The total number of questionnaires sent and received</b>	<b>Motheo</b>	<b>Xhariep</b>	<b>Lejweleputswa</b>	<b>Fezile Dabi</b>	<b>Thabo Mofutsanyane</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Questionnaires Sent</b>	23	20	20	19	18	100
<b>Questionnaires Received</b>	22	18	15	11	18	84

**Table 4.19 Questionnaires sent and received per district**

## 4.8 Data analysis

This section focuses on data analysis.

### 4.8.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are concerned with analysing data for the purpose of describing or characterising it (Pagano, 2012:10). These statistics, sometimes referred to as summary statistics, are used to summarise, organise and reduce a large number of observations. The use of descriptive statistics is the most fundamental way to summarise data, and it is indispensable in interpreting the results of qualitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:162).

### 4.8.2 Inferential Statistics: MANOVA

Inferential statistics are concerned with using obtained data to make inferences or draw conclusions about the population (Pagano, 2012:10). Inferential statistics describe the probability of results for a population. These statistics are used to make inferences or predictions about the similarity of a sample to the population from which the sample is drawn. Because many research questions require the estimation of population characteristics from the available sample of subjects, or behaviour, inferential statistics are commonly used in reporting results. Inferential statistics depend on descriptive statistics, therefore, inferential statistics make very little sense (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:163).

In this study, the researcher made use of both descriptive and inferential statistics. The reason for this is that the two forms of analysis put together,

#### 4.8.2.1 *Inferential statistics: Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA): Assumptions*

Assumptions for checking for univariate outliers, normality, multicollinearity, linearity, multivariate outliers, checking for the equality of variance-covariance matrices and the assumption of homogeneity of variances are all explained in Chapter 5.

#### **4.8.2.2 Inferential statistics: Factorial Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA): Assumptions**

Dependent variables: Leadership efficacy subscales, Independent variables: Gender and Experience as a manager

##### ***Sample size***

In order to run a MANOVA, there needs to be more individuals in every group of the independent variables than the number of dependent variables. In some instances, MANOVA could not be run because the numbers of some of the groups of the independent variables were far less than the number of the dependent variable.

##### ***Gender***

When looking at the independent variable "Gender", there were more than eight individuals in each of the groups (males and females). Thus, the sample size was not a problem with "Gender" and a MANOVA could be run (see Figure 5.37 in Chapter 5).

##### ***Experience as principal***

The independent variable "Experience" had more than eight individuals in each of the groups (different years of experience). Thus, the sample size was not a problem here and a MANOVA was run (see Figure 5.38 in Chapter 5).

##### ***Outliers***

An outlier refers to a data point that falls far outside the main distribution of scores. Depending on how extreme it is and the total number of scores in the distribution, an outlier can distort statistical analysis that includes the actual values of the score, such as the mean and the standard deviation. There are three deleterious outliers: they increase standard deviation which exaggerates variance; they decrease the normality

of distribution; and they can bias the results, leading to erroneous conclusions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:180).

### ***Gender of principals***

The eight dependent variables were examined for outliers by making use of boxplots. From the boxplots (see Table 5.9 in Chapter 5) it could be seen that there were no extreme outliers, but there were five moderate outliers in the data. Only one of these cases, however, presented as an outlier for two dependent variables. Since these outliers were not due to data entry errors, but represented actual data points, it was decided not to delete them from the analysis. Overall the observations were about equally above and below the mode.

### ***Experience of principals***

The eight dependent variables were examined for outliers by making use of boxplots. From the boxplots (see Table 5.9 in Chapter 5) it could be seen that there were no extreme outliers, but there were a number of moderate outliers in the data, with three cases being outliers for two dependent variables. Since these outliers were not due to data entry errors, but represented actual data points, it was decided not to delete them from the analysis.

### ***Normality***

#### ***Gender of principals***

Normal Q-Q plots (see Table 5.11 in Chapter 5) were used to assess for normality of the dependent variables within each group of the independent variables. If data was normally distributed, the points in the plots would follow the diagonal line. MANOVA is relatively robust against deviations from normality, and thus only approximate normal distributions were required. From the Q-Q plots it could be seen that the data seemed to be approximately normally distributed overall.



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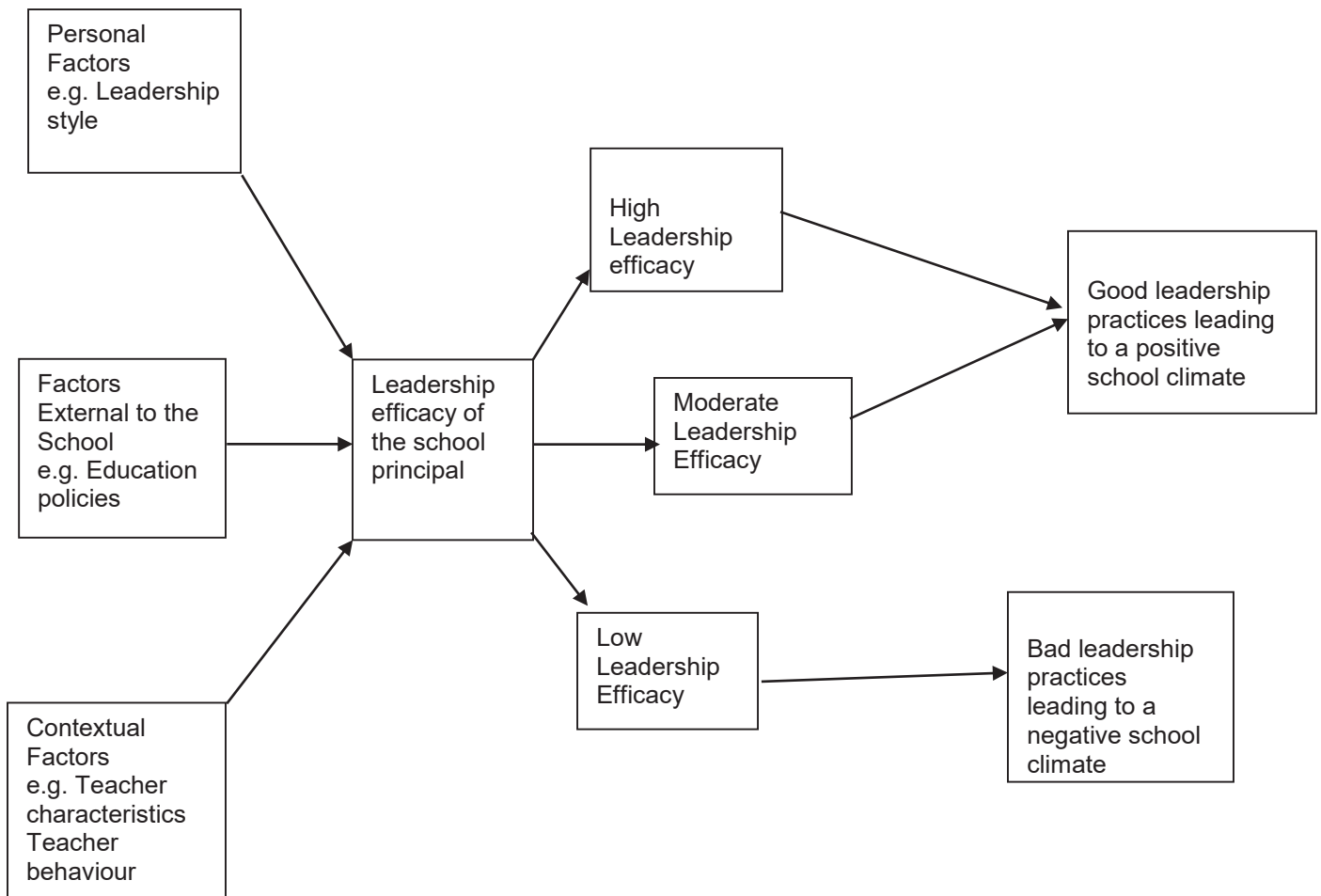
### ***Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices***

Both the Box's M multivariate test of homoscedasticity and Levene's univariate tests for equality of error variances showed that heteroscedasticity was not present. Thus, it could be assumed that there was both univariate and multivariate homogeneity of variance across groups (see Table 5.39 in Chapter 5).

The following section looks at the conceptual design of the study.

## 4.9 Conceptual design of the study

The conceptual framework which indicates how the different factors affect the leadership efficacy of school principals is indicated in the figure below:



**Figure 4.5 Conceptual design of the study**

## 4.10 Ethical considerations

Ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects. Ethical guidelines also serve as standards, and a basis upon which each researcher ought to evaluate his or her own conduct (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:434).

Some ethical issues which the researcher took into consideration in this study include the following: voluntary submission, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Participation of individuals in the study was voluntary. The school principals, who participated in this study, did so voluntarily. Participants were not forced to take part in the study. All the participants were given information on the nature and purpose of the study. The researcher also assured the research participants about the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The researcher also understood that it was within the rights of participants to decline participation and respected and accepted that decision by some of the school principals. Lastly, the participants will be informed when the research findings are available. These will be made available in the different districts of the Free State Department of Education.

#### **4.11 Conclusion**

This chapter explained the research design. It also provided reasons why some methods and techniques were chosen for the study. It also indicated the population and the sample of the study, provided information on the pilot study, and the reasons for conducting it. The instrument which was used by the researcher to collect data was also explained and reasons were provided why the particular instrument was chosen over others. The next chapter, that is Chapter 5, explains the quantitative data presentation and analysis.

## CHAPTER 5

### QUANTITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 presents the quantitative data presentation and analysis on school principal's leadership efficacy and its effect on their leadership practices.

#### 5.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are now discussed.

##### 5.2.1 Demographic data

Section A of the questionnaire presents information on the biographical data of the school principals. This section focuses on aspects such as the highest qualification of the school principal, their experience, their gender, the school district, geographical location of the school, the school category, the school type and the leadership style used by the school principal.

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Master's Degree	14	16.7
Honours Degree	44	52.4
Bachelor's Degree	20	23.8
Other	6	7.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5.1 Respondent's qualification**

Of the 84 questionnaires received from the school principals, 16.7% had a Master's degree, 52.4% an Honours degree, 23.8% a Bachelor's, and 7.1% Other qualifications. This means that 69.1% of principals received training in management

and leadership. It also means they have the qualifications which make them eligible for the positions they hold as school principals.

**Table 5.2 Experience as school principal**

Experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	31	36.9
6-10 years	16	19.0
11-15 years	17	20.2
16-20 years	10	11.9
Other	10	11.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The experience of principals who participated in this study ranged from below five years to more than 20 years. A total of 36.9% of the principals had been in the position for less than five years, 19% had experience that ranged between six and ten years, with 20.2% between 11 and 15 years, 11.9% had between 16 and 20 years' experience, while another 11.9% had been principals for more than 20 years. This means that the principals who participated in this study have experience as principals.

**Table 5.3 Gender of Respondents (N=84)**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	13	15.5
Male	71	84.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A total of 15.5% (13) of the school principals who participated in the study were female and 84.5% (71) male. The overwhelming majority of the principals who participated in this study were male. The fact that female school principals constituted only 15.5% of the respondents in this study shows that women are under-represented in leadership positions in the Free State Province. This means there is a need for more female school principals.

**Table 5.4 Respondents by School District (N=84)**

Districts	Frequency	Percent
Xhariep	18	21.4
Motheo	22	26.2
Lejweleputswa	15	17.9
Thabo Mofutsanyane	18	21.4
Fezile Dabi	11	13.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Of the 84 school principals who participated in this study, 21.4% were from the Xhariep District, 26.2% from the Motheo District, 17.9% from the Lejweleputswa District, 21.4% from the Thabo Mofutsanyana District, and 13.1% from the Fezile Dabi District. The highest number of principals who participated in this study were from the Motheo District and the least number of principals were from the Fezile Dabi District.

**Table 5.5 Respondents by Geographical Location (N=84)**

Geographical location	Frequency	Percent
Farm	2	2.4
Township	47	56.0
Town	34	40.5
Total	83	98.8
Missing System	1	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A total of 2.4% of the principals who participated in this study were from farm schools, 56.6% were from schools situated in the townships, and 40.5% were from town schools. There was one missing case because one of the principals did not complete this section. The majority of the respondents, at 56%, were principals in township schools, followed by principals in town schools, at 40.5%, and 2% of the respondents were principals in farm schools.

**Table 5.6 Respondents by School Category (N=84)**

	Frequency	Percent
Comprehensive Secondary School	10	11.9
Ordinary Secondary School	69	82.1
Combined Schools	5	5.9
Total	84	98.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The principals who participated in this study came from schools in different categories. A total of 11.9% were from Comprehensive Secondary Schools, 82.1% were from Ordinary Secondary Schools, and 4.8% were principals in Combined Schools. An overwhelming majority of school principals who participated in the study were from Ordinary Secondary Schools.

**Table 5.7 Respondents by School Type**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Farm</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.6</b>
Independent (Private)	3	3.6
Public	77	91.7
Total	83	98.8
Missing System	1	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A total of 3.6% of the principals who participated in the study were principals in both farm and independent schools, and the majority of them, at 91.7%, were principals in public schools.

### **The leadership style**

In the following tables, the principals identified the type of leadership styles they used in managing their schools. Some of the respondents identified more than one category of leadership.

**Table 5.8 (a)**

Leadership Style	Autocratic		Democratic		Transform-ational	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
No	79	97.5	38	46.9	60	74.1
Yes	2	2.5	43	53.1	21	25.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5.2.8 (b)**

	Transactional		Situational		Other	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
No	79	97.5	58	71.6	76	93.8
Yes	2	2.5	23	28.4	5	6.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A total of 81 school principals from the 84 indicated their leadership styles. Thus, there were three missing cases. Of the 81 principals, 2.5% used the autocratic leadership style, 53.1% used the democratic leadership style, 25.9% used the transformational leadership style, 2.5% used the transactional leadership style, 28.4% used the situational leadership style, and 6.2% used other leadership styles. The principals who chose other leadership styles did not specify the type of leadership styles they used. The majority of the principals indicated that they used a democratic leadership style, followed by principals who used a situational leadership style, followed by principals using the transformational leadership style. The least number of principals used the autocratic and transactional leadership styles.

**Table 5.9 Formal training received by school principals prior to being principals**

Formal training received	Frequency	Percent
Yes	60	71.4
No	24	28.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>



The responses of the school principals in this question indicate that the majority of the principals, at 71.4%, had received formal training in management and leadership before they were appointed as principals. A total of 28.6% did not receive formal training prior to being appointed as school principals. This means that the majority of the principals received prior preparation for their positions and this explains why the leadership efficacy of school principals ranges from moderate to high leadership efficacy.

**Table 5.10 The form of training received by principals**

The form of training received	ACE in Educational Management		B.Ed. Honours in Educational Management/Leadership		Other	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
No	40	66.7	26	43.3	47	78.3
Yes	19	31.7	33	55.0	12	20.0
Missing	1	1.7	1	1.7	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0	60	100.0

In Table 5.2.10, the school principals indicated the forms of training they had received prior to being appointed. A total of 31.7% of the principals did the ACE in Educational Management, 55% did the B.Ed. Honours in Educational Management and 20% did other forms of training in management or leadership. This means that the majority of the respondents, at 71.4%, received formal training prior to being appointed as school principals. The other forms of training could be workshops or short courses. These school principals attended career preparation programmes, this means that the majority of the principals should be competent to perform their duties.

**Table 5.11 Duration of the workshops**

Duration of workshop	Frequency	Percent
One day	18	24.0
Two days	23	30.7
One week	26	34.7
Other	8	10.7
Total	75	100.0

A total of 24% of the principals attended a one-day workshop, 30.7% attended a two-day workshop, 34.7% attended a one-week workshop, and 10.7 attended workshops that lasted more than a week. In Table 5.2.10 and 5.2.11 the percentages might add up to more than 100% because the respondents could choose more than one option in the possible responses given.

Looking at the biographical data of the school principals we can conclude that principals are qualified for the positions they hold as the majority of them have B.Ed Honours degrees and one a Master's degree (see Table 5.2.1). They also have experience in education (see Table 5.21). The school principals also indicated that they attended training courses in management and leadership, either prior to being appointed or during their time as principals. All these factors are indicative of the fact that the principals have the necessary knowledge and skills to lead and manage schools.

### 5.3 SECTION B: LEADERSHIP EFFICACY

Section B presents descriptive statistics on the leadership efficacy of school principals.

The following are purely descriptive statistics therefore inferences to the population could not be made.

#### 5.3.1 Responses of school principals to items on the leadership efficacy scale:

**Table 5.12: Responses per item (N=84)**

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:			
	QUESTIONS	Means	Standard Deviation
1.	Your skills to assess the staff development needs of your school.	5.33	1.01
2.	Your knowledge of best practice research related to instructional practices.	5.18	1.04

3.	Your ability to develop a systematic process for mentoring teachers in your school.	<b>5.11</b>	<b>1.33</b>
4.	Understanding the process of curriculum design, implementation and evaluation.	<b>5.36</b>	<b>1.07</b>
5.	Possessing the skills needed to implement the effective use of resources so that priority is given to supporting learners.	<b>5.45</b>	<b>1.06</b>
6.	Your skills to engage staff in the development of effective school improvement plans that result in improved learning.	<b>5.62</b>	<b>1.12</b>
7.	Understanding the development of a professional growth plan.	<b>5.40</b>	<b>1.08</b>
8.	Leading staff to appreciate the kinds of knowledge and skills learners and their families can add to the learning process.	<b>5.13</b>	<b>1.17</b>
9.	Your ability to understand and communicate to staff the complex instructional and motivational issues that are presented by a diverse learner population.	<b>5.39</b>	<b>0.99</b>
10.	Your understanding of all of the instructional programmes in your school.	<b>5.27</b>	<b>1.22</b>
11.	Your skills to lead staff to understand and respect the diversity of your learner population.	<b>5.42</b>	<b>1.21</b>
12.	Your ability to demonstrate the effective use of technology to your fellow teachers.	<b>4.77</b>	<b>1.37</b>
13.	Having a clear sense of your own personal development needs and the resources you can access to address those needs.	<b>5.49</b>	<b>1.14</b>
14.	Your ability to assess school climate using multiple methods.	<b>5.12</b>	<b>1.06</b>
15.	Your ability to engage parents in the assessment of your school climate.	<b>5.24</b>	<b>1.01</b>
16.	Your ability to engage staff in the assessment of your school climate.	<b>5.42</b>	<b>0.98</b>
17.	Your knowledge to use data about your school to encourage appropriate learner behaviour.	<b>5.31</b>	<b>1.17</b>
18.	Your knowledge to use data about your school climate to support a positive learning environment.	<b>5.44</b>	<b>1.02</b>
19.	Your knowledge to use data about your school climate to improve the schools culture in ways that promote staff morale.	<b>5.39</b>	<b>0.96</b>
20.	Your ability to engage learners in the assessment of your school climate.	<b>5.25</b>	<b>1.19</b>

21.	Your ability to solicit community resources to resolve school issues.	<b>4.75</b>	<b>1.18</b>
22.	Your ability to supplement school resources by obtaining resources from the community.	<b>4.55</b>	<b>1.32</b>
23.	Your ability to use marketing strategies and processes to create partnership with business, community and institutions of higher education.	<b>4.62</b>	<b>1.38</b>
24.	Understanding community relations models that are needed to create partnerships with business, community and institutions of higher education.	<b>4.48</b>	<b>1.23</b>
25.	Your ability to identify and describe the services of community agencies that provide resources for the families of children in your school.	<b>4.37</b>	<b>1.37</b>
26.	Your ability to resolve issues relating to budgeting.	<b>5.35</b>	<b>1.30</b>
27.	Your skills to involve families and community stakeholders in the decision-making process at your school.	<b>4.98</b>	<b>1.31</b>
28.	Your ability to explain to staff and parents how the decisions in your school are related to state and national institutions policies.	<b>5.45</b>	<b>1.02</b>
29.	Your ability to explain to staff and parents the decision-making process of your school.	<b>5.70</b>	<b>1.02</b>
30.	Your ability to explain the role of law and education policies in shaping the school community.	<b>5.52</b>	<b>1.01</b>
31.	Your ability to examine learner performance data to extract the information necessary for school improvement planning.	<b>5.54</b>	<b>1.13</b>
32.	Your ability to apply appropriate research methods pertaining to performance of your school.	<b>5.21</b>	<b>1.03</b>
33.	Your ability to make decisions within the boundaries of ethical and legal principles.	<b>5.55</b>	<b>1.05</b>
34.	Your ability to understand and evaluate education research that is related to programmes and issues in your school.	<b>5.31</b>	<b>1.04</b>
35.	Making sound decisions and having the ability to explain them based on professional, ethical, and legal principles.	<b>5.62</b>	<b>0.92</b>
36.	Finding information to address problems with facilities, in accordance with legal principles.	<b>5.13</b>	<b>1.05</b>

37.	Your ability to provide safe facilities (building, playground) according to legal principles.	<b>5.19</b>	<b>1.09</b>
38.	Your ability to find the appropriate personnel to resolve facility-related problems.	<b>5.11</b>	<b>1.15</b>
39.	Your knowledge of legal principles that promote educational equity.	<b>5.35</b>	<b>1.14</b>
40.	Your ability to identify additional resources to assist all of the individuals in your school.	<b>5.21</b>	<b>1.11</b>
41.	Your ability to use community resources to achieve school goals.	<b>4.96</b>	<b>1.22</b>
42.	Your ability to use community resources to solve school problems.	<b>4.83</b>	<b>1.32</b>
43.	Your ability to use community resources to support learner achievement.	<b>4.98</b>	<b>1.34</b>
44.	Being sensitive to student diversity.	<b>5.65</b>	<b>1.07</b>
45.	Knowing that your learners and colleagues can trust you to be ethical in handling sensitive information.	<b>5.93</b>	<b>0.93</b>
46.	Your communication abilities to lead in a variety of educational settings.	<b>5.70</b>	<b>0.98</b>
47.	Your skills to interact positively with the different groups that make up your school community.	<b>5.81</b>	<b>1.02</b>
48.	Your ability to lead your staff in involving parents in the education of their children.	<b>5.76</b>	<b>0.93</b>
49.	Your ability to develop a vision that will help ensure the success of all learners.	<b>5.63</b>	<b>0.97</b>
50.	Possessing the skills to lead a school community to the development of a clear vision.	<b>5.62</b>	<b>1.06</b>
51.	Your ability to use strategic processes to develop the vision of the school.	<b>5.60</b>	<b>1.15</b>
52.	Your ability to establish two-way communication with stakeholders (staff, parents, learners and community) in order to obtain the commitment necessary for implementing the vision for your school.	<b>5.63</b>	<b>1.08</b>
	<b>Average Mean Score</b>	<b>5.29</b>	<b>0.35</b>

The overall mean score per item is 5.29. The mean score per item is indicative of the fact that the principals are confident in their ability to perform their duties as principals. The average mean score is 5.29. The highest mean score is 5.93 and the lowest is 4.37. Thus, their confidence in performing their tasks ranged from a moderate to a high leadership efficacy. The highest mean score of 5.93 shows that the confidence of school principals in their ability to know that their learners and colleagues can trust them to be ethical in handling sensitive information is high. The mean score of 4.37 indicates a moderate self-efficacy of principals in their ability to identify and describe the services of community agencies that provide resources for the families of children in their schools. The range is the difference between the highest mean score and the lowest mean score and the range is equal to 1.56.

The following table provides a summary of the responses of the principals to items on the leadership efficacy scale:

**Table 5.13 Summary table**

<b>Average Mean for the Full Scale</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Maximum Value</b>	<b>Minimum Value</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b>5.29</b>	0.35	5.93	4.37	1.56

Table 5.13 shows that the leadership efficacy of the principals is high at the average mean of 5.29. The questionnaire used had a scale of one to seven. 1 shows a low leadership efficacy and 7 on the leadership efficacy scale shows a high leadership efficacy.

### **5.3.2 Responses of school principals to items per dimension on the leadership scale**

Table 5.14 below looks at the leadership efficacy of the school principals per dimensions. There are eight dimensions in which the principals assessed themselves. These include Communication in a diverse environment, Development of school

vision, Decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles, School climate development, Instructional leadership and staff development, Resource and facility management, Use of community resources, and Community collaboration. This table shows the mean scores obtained by the principals in each dimension. In the table below, the scores have been arranged from the lowest mean to the highest. At a mean score of 5.77 the school principals show a high leadership efficacy in communication in a diverse environment. The lowest mean score in the eight dimensions is 4.73. Even though this mean score is seen as a low mean score. At 4.73 it indicates a moderate leadership efficacy in community collaboration.

**Table 5.14 Leadership efficacy by eight dimensions**

No	Dimensions	Means	Standard Deviation
1	Communication in a diverse environment	5.77	0.06
2	Development of school vision	5.62	0.35
3	Decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles	5.49	0.26
4	School climate development	5.31	0.33
5	Instructional leadership and staff development	5.30	0.12
6	Resource and facility management	5.20	0.26
7	Use of community resources	4.92	0.32
8	Community collaboration	4.73	0.31
	<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>	<b>5.29</b>	<b>0.35</b>

The next section focuses on how the principals perceive their leadership efficacy in the different dimensions of their tasks per item. In other words, the focus will be on how the principals assess themselves in the performance of their duties in each dimension. The first dimension is instructional leadership and staff development.

### 5.3.3 Responses per dimension

The responses of school principals per dimension are now discussed.

#### 5.3.3.1 Leadership efficacy of principals in instructional leadership and staff development

The following table looks at the responses of school principals in dimension of instructional leadership and staff development.

**Table 5.15 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

<b>INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
1.	Your skills to assess the staff development needs of your school.	5.33	1.17
2.	Your knowledge of best practice research related to instructional practices.	5.18	1.04
3.	Your ability to develop a systematic process for mentoring teachers in your school.	5.11	1.33
4.	Understanding the process of curriculum design, implementation and evaluation.	5.36	1.07
5.	Possessing the skills needed to implement the effective use of resources so that priority is given to supporting learners.	5.45	1.07
6.	Your skills to engage staff in the development of effective school improvement plans that result in improved learning.	5.62	1.06
7.	Understanding the development of a professional growth plan.	5.40	1.12
8.	Leading staff to appreciate the kinds of knowledge and skills learners and their families can add to the learning process.	5.13	1.08
9.	Your ability to understand and communicate to staff the complex instructional and motivational issues that are presented by a diverse learner population.	5.39	1.67
10.	Your understanding of all of the instructional programmes in your school.	5.27	1.09



11.	Your skills to lead staff to understand and respect the diversity of your learner population.	5.42	1.22
12.	Your ability to demonstrate the effective use of technology to your fellow teachers.	4.77	1.24
13.	Having a clear sense of your own personal development needs and the resources you can access to address those needs.	5.49	1.36
<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>5.30</b>	<b>0.22</b>

Table 5.15 shows that the leadership efficacy of school principals in instructional leadership per item is moderately high with a mean of 5.30. The principals show more confidence in their skills to engage in the development of effective school improvement plans that improved learning. Their confidence in their ability to demonstrate the effective use of technology to their fellow teachers is the lowest score, even though at a mean of 4.77 the leadership efficacy is moderately high. This means principals are not as confident in this aspect of instructional leadership as they are in other aspects of instructional leadership.

### 5.3.3.2 Leadership efficacy of school principals in school climate development

The following discussion is on the leadership efficacy of school principals in school climate development.

**Table 5.16 Leadership efficacy in school climate development**

<b>SCHOOL CLIMATE DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
14.	Your ability to assess school climate using multiple methods.	5.12	1.06
15.	Your ability to engage parents in the assessment of your school climate.	5.24	1.01
16.	Your ability to engage staff in the assessment of your school climate.	5.42	0.98
17.	Your knowledge to use information about your school to encourage appropriate learner behavior.	5.31	1.17
18.	Your knowledge to use information about your school climate to support a positive learning environment.	5.44	1.02

19.	Your knowledge to use information about your school climate to improve the school's culture in ways that promote staff morale.	5.39	0.96
20.	Your ability to engage learners in the assessment of your school climate.	5.25	1.19
<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>5.31</b>	<b>0.12</b>

In Table 5.16 it is shown that the principals have confidence in school climate development. The overall mean of school climate development is 5.31, which shows a moderately high leadership efficacy of the principals. The scores in this dimension range from a mean score of 5.12 to 5.44. Even though the leadership efficacy of the principals in the Free State Province is moderately high, the lowest mean score shows that of the school principals have less confidence in their ability to assess school climate using multiple methods, compared to the other tasks of school climate development. The highest mean of 5.44 shows that the confidence of principals in their knowledge to use information about their school climate to support positive learning environment is moderately high.

### 5.3.3.3 Leadership efficacy of school principals in community collaboration

The leadership efficacy of school principals in community collaboration is discussed in the following section.

**Table 5.17 Leadership efficacy in community collaboration**

<b>COMMUNITY COLLABORATION</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
21.	Your ability to solicit community resources to resolve school issues.	4.75	1.18
22.	Your ability to supplement school resources by obtaining resources from the community.	4.55	1.32
23.	Your ability to use marketing strategies and processes to create partnerships with business, community and institutions of higher education.	4.62	1.38
24.	Understanding community relations models that are needed to create	4.48	1.23

	partnerships with business, community and institutions of higher education.		
25.	Your ability to identify and describe the services of community agencies that provide resources for the families of children in your school.	4.37	1.37
26.	Your ability to resolve issues relating to budgeting.	5.35	1.30
27.	Your skills to involve families and community stakeholders in the decision-making process at your school.	4.98	1.31
	<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>	<b>4.73</b>	<b>0.34</b>

Table 5.17 shows that the confidence of principals in performing tasks linked to the dimension, community collaboration, is moderate. Most of the mean scores per item or per question in this dimension range between 4.37 and 4.75, with only one exception with a mean score of 5.35. So the mean scores in community collaboration range from 4.37 to 5.35. The mean score of 5.35, show that the principals have confidence in their ability to resolve issues relation to budgeting, but with a mean score of 4.37, show less confidence in their ability to identify and describe the services of community agencies that provide resources for the families of the children in their schools.

#### 5.3.3.4 Leadership efficacy of school principals in data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles

Leadership efficacy of school principals in data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles is discussed as follows:

**Table 5.18 Leadership efficacy in data-based decision-making**

<b>DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING ALIGNED WITH LEGAL AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
28.	Your ability to explain to staff and parents how the decisions in your school are related to state and national institutions policies.	5.45	1.02

29.	Your ability to explain to staff and parents the decision-making process of your school.	5.70	1.02
30.	Your ability to explain the role of law and education policies in shaping the school community.	5.52	1.01
31.	Your ability to examine learner performance data to extract the information necessary for school improvement planning.	5.54	1.13
32.	Your ability to apply appropriate research methods pertaining to the performance of your school.	5.21	1.03
33.	Your ability to make decisions within the boundaries of ethical and legal principles.	5.55	1.05
34.	Your ability to understand and evaluate education research that is related to programmes and issues in your school.	5.31	1.04
35.	Making sound decisions and having the ability to explain them based on professional, ethical, and legal principles.	5.62	0.92
<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>5.49</b>	<b>0.16</b>

The mean scores in Table 5.18 range from 5.21 to 5.70. This indicates that the confidence of principals in data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles is moderately high. Their confidence, with a mean score of 5.70, is high in their ability to explain to staff and parents the decision-making process of their school. In other words, they are confident in explaining how decisions in their schools are reached. At a mean of 5.21 the principals' leadership efficacy is high in data-based decision-making aligned with legal and ethical principles, but compared to other mean scores in this dimension this mean is low. This means that they are not as confident in their ability to apply appropriate research methods pertaining to the performance of their schools as they are in other data-based decision-making tasks.

### **5.3.3.5 Leadership efficacy of school principals in resource and facility management**

The leadership efficacy of school principals in resource and facility management is now discussed.

**Table 5.19 Leadership efficacy in resource and facility management**

<b>RESOURCE AND FACILITY MANAGEEMENT</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
36.	Finding information to address problems with facilities, in accordance with legal principles.	5.13	1.05
37.	Your ability to provide safe facilities (building, playground) according to legal principles.	5.19	1.09
38.	Your ability to find the appropriate personnel to resolve facility-related problems.	5.11	1.15
39.	Your knowledge of legal principles that promote educational equity.	5.35	1.14
40.	Your ability to identify additional resources to assist all of the individuals in your school.	5.21	1.11
<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>5.20</b>	<b>0.94</b>

Table 5.19 shows that the confidence of principals in performing tasks related to resource facility management is moderately high. The highest mean score is 5.35 and the lowest is 5.11. This means that they are confident in their knowledge of legal principles that promote educational equity in resource and facility management. Their confidence is less in their ability to find the appropriate personnel to resolve facility-related problems, compared to all the other tasks of this dimension.

### 5.3.3.6 Leadership efficacy of school principals in use of community resources

Leadership efficacy of school principals in use of community resources is discussed.

**Table 5.20 Leadership of school principals in the use of community resources**

<b>USE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
41.	Your ability to use community resources to achieve school goals.	4.96	1.22
42.	Your ability to use community resources to solve school problems.	4.83	1.32
43.	Your ability to use community resources to support learner achievement.	4.98	1.34
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.92</b>	0.08

With an overall mean score of 4.92, the confidence of the principals in the use of community resources is moderate. The highest mean score is 4.98, followed by a mean score of 4.96, and the lowest score is 4.83. This means principals have a moderate confidence in performing tasks linked to this dimension. The means range between 4.83 and 4.98. This shows that they are not as confident in performing the leadership tasks linked to the use of community resources as they are in performing tasks in other dimensions of leadership. They show confidence, though moderate, in their ability to use community resources to support learner achievement and show less confidence in their ability to use community resources to achieve school goals.

### 5.3.3.7 Leadership efficacy of school principals in communication in a diverse environment

Leadership efficacy of school principals in communication in a diverse environment is now discussed.

**Table 5.21 Leadership efficacy in communication in a diverse environment**

<b>COMMUNICATION IN A DIVERSE ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
44.	Being sensitive to student diversity.	5.65	1.07
45.	Knowing that your learners and colleagues can trust you to be ethical in handling sensitive information.	5.93	0.93
46.	Your communication abilities to lead in a variety of educational settings.	5.70	0.98
47.	Your skills to interact positively with the different groups that make up your school community.	5.81	1.02
48.	Your ability to lead your staff in involving parents in the education of their children.	5.76	0.93
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>5.77</b>	<b>0.08</b>

The confidence of the principals in communication in a diverse environment is high. The overall mean score in this dimension is 5.77. The lowest mean score, is also high at a mean of 5.65. This means that compared to other tasks in this dimensions, the principals feel less confident in their ability to be less sensitive to student diversity. In other, words the principals feel that they are not sensitive to student diversity. The highest means score in this dimension is 5.93 and that means they are confident in knowing that their learners and colleagues can trust them to be ethical in handling sensitive information. This task is very important because the principal in his leadership position should be trusted by the stakeholders in education to keep confidential and sensitive information to him or herself.

### 5.3.3.8 Leadership efficacy of school principals in development of school vision

Leadership efficacy of school principals in development of school vision is now discussed.

**Table 5.22 Leadership efficacy of school principals in the development of school vision**

<b>DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL VISION</b>			
<b>In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:</b>			
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
49.	Your ability to develop a vision that will help ensure the success of all learners.	5.63	0.97
50.	Possessing the skills to lead a school community to the development of a clear vision.	5.62	1.06
51.	Your ability to use strategic processes to develop the vision of the school.	5.60	1.15
52.	Your ability to establish two-way communication with stakeholders (staff, parents, learners and community) in order to obtain the commitment necessary for implementing the vision for your school.	5.63	1.08
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>5.62</b>	<b>0.01</b>

Table 5.22 shows that the confidence of the principals in their ability to develop a school vision is high at an overall mean of 5.62. The means in the different tasks in this dimension range between 5.60 and 5.63. The principals are confident in performing the tasks linked to this dimension, and with a mean of 5.63, they show more confidence in their ability to establish two-way communication with stakeholders (staff, parents, learners and community) in order to obtain the commitment necessary for implementing the vision of their school. They show less confidence in their ability to use strategic processes to develop the vision of their school compared to other tasks of this dimension.

Looking at the responses of school principals per item, the conclusion is that they are confident in the performance of their tasks as principals.

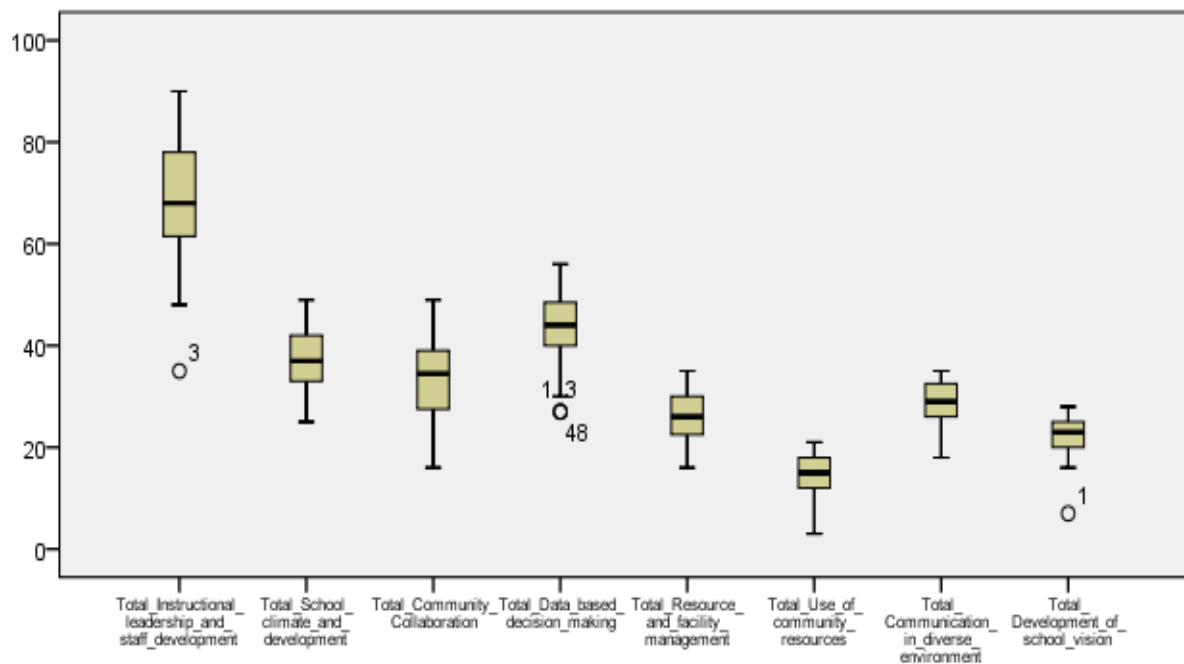


### 5.3.4 Testing for statistical differences in the leadership dimensions of school principals

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in Leadership Efficacy dimensions for secondary school principals. There were a couple of moderate outliers in the data as assessed by boxplots, but these were not due to data entry errors and it was decided to keep the cases in the analysis. The data was normally distributed as assessed by Normal Q-Q Plots. The assumption of sphericity was violated, as assessed by Mauchly's test of sphericity,  $\chi^2(27) = 322.947$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Therefore, a Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied ( $\epsilon = 0.403$ ). There were statistically significant differences in the Leadership Efficacy dimensions for the principals,  $F(2.824, 234.366) = 1350.283$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Post hoc analysis with a Bonferroni adjustment revealed that each of the Leadership Efficacy dimensions differed significantly from each other dimension ( $p < 0.05$  for all comparisons). The highest mean scores were obtained for Instructional leadership and staff development (Mean=68.93), followed by Data- based decision-making (Mean=43.91), School climate and development (Mean=37.17), Community collaboration (Mean=33.08), Communication in diverse environments (Mean=28.86), Resource and facility management (Mean=25.99), Development of school vision (Mean=22.48), and finally, Use of community resources (Mean=14.77).

The next section focuses on checking for outliers.

### 5.3.5 Checking for outliers



**Figure 5.1 Outliers**

In statistics, an outlier is an observation point that is distant from other observations. It is a data point that falls outside the main distribution of scores (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014:179). Figure 5.1 above shows that there were four moderate outliers in the data, as assessed by boxplots.

The following section focuses on pairwise comparisons.

### 5.3.6 Pairwise comparisons

Pairwise comparison generally is any process of comparing entities in pairs to judge which of each entity is preferred, or has a greater amount of some quantitative property, or whether or not the two entities are identical. The method of pairwise comparison is used in the scientific study of preferences, attitudes, social choice and public choice (<https://en.wikipedia.org>).

Table 5.23 below shows pairwise comparisons in this study by focusing on the eight leadership dimensions.

**Table 5.23 Pairwise Comparisons**

(I) Leadership_Dimensions		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. <sup>b</sup>	95% Confidence Interval for Difference <sup>b</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	31.762*	.806	.000	29.160	34.364
	3	35.845*	.920	.000	32.876	38.814
	4	25.024*	.847	.000	22.291	27.757
	5	42.940*	.955	.000	39.857	46.024
	6	54.155*	1.080	.000	50.669	57.641
	7	40.071*	.974	.000	36.928	43.214
	8	46.452*	.999	.000	43.226	49.679
2	1	-31.762*	.806	.000	-34.364	-29.160
	3	4.083*	.614	.000	2.101	6.065
	4	-6.738*	.415	.000	-8.077	-5.399
	5	11.179*	.417	.000	9.834	12.524
	6	22.393*	.560	.000	20.585	24.200
	7	8.310*	.435	.000	6.905	9.714
	8	14.690*	.406	.000	13.378	16.003
3	1	-35.845*	.920	.000	-38.814	-32.876
	2	-4.083*	.614	.000	-6.065	-2.101
	4	-10.821*	.667	.000	-12.976	-8.667
	5	7.095*	.556	.000	5.300	8.891
	6	18.310*	.572	.000	16.463	20.156
	7	4.226*	.639	.000	2.165	6.287
	8	10.607*	.599	.000	8.674	12.540
4	1	-25.024*	.847	.000	-27.757	-22.291
	2	6.738*	.415	.000	5.399	8.077
	3	10.821*	.667	.000	8.667	12.976
	5	17.917*	.478	.000	16.373	19.460
	6	29.131*	.624	.000	27.117	31.145
	7	15.048*	.508	.000	13.409	16.686
	8	21.429*	.494	.000	19.834	23.023
5	1	-42.940*	.955	.000	-46.024	-39.857
	2	-11.179*	.417	.000	-12.524	-9.834
	3	-7.095*	.556	.000	-8.891	-5.300
	4	-17.917*	.478	.000	-19.460	-16.373
	6	11.214*	.395	.000	9.939	12.490
	7	-2.869*	.357	.000	-4.021	-1.717
	8	3.512*	.363	.000	2.341	4.683
6	1	-54.155*	1.080	.000	-57.641	-50.669

	2	-22.393*	.560	.000	-24.200	-20.585
	3	-18.310*	.572	.000	-20.156	-16.463
	4	-29.131*	.624	.000	-31.145	-27.117
	5	-11.214*	.395	.000	-12.490	-9.939
	7	-14.083*	.399	.000	-15.370	-12.796
	8	-7.702*	.327	.000	-8.759	-6.645
7	1	-40.071*	.974	.000	-43.214	-36.928
	2	-8.310*	.435	.000	-9.714	-6.905
	3	-4.226*	.639	.000	-6.287	-2.165
	4	-15.048*	.508	.000	-16.686	-13.409
	5	2.869*	.357	.000	1.717	4.021
	6	14.083*	.399	.000	12.796	15.370
	8	6.381*	.320	.000	5.348	7.414
8	1	-46.452*	.999	.000	-49.679	-43.226
	2	-14.690*	.406	.000	-16.003	-13.378
	3	-10.607*	.599	.000	-12.540	-8.674
	4	-21.429*	.494	.000	-23.023	-19.834
	5	-3.512*	.363	.000	-4.683	-2.341
	6	7.702*	.327	.000	6.645	8.759
	7	-6.381*	.320	.000	-7.414	-5.348

As can be seen from the Pairwise Comparisons Table 5.22 above, each of the Leadership Efficacy dimensions differed significantly from each other dimension ( $p < 0.05$  for all comparisons).

### 5.3.6 Descriptive statistics of the eight dimensions

The following table shows the descriptive statistics in the eight dimensions of leadership.

<b>Table 5.24 Descriptive Statistics</b>			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Total_Instructional_leadership_and_staff_development	68.9286	11.24512	84
Total_School_climate_and_development	37.1667	6.13274	84
Total_Community_Collaboration	33.0833	7.57168	84
Total_Data_based_decision_making	43.9048	6.96743	84
Total_Resource_and_facility_management	25.9881	4.75292	84
Total_Use_of_community_resources	14.7738	3.71046	84
Total_Communication_in_diverse_environment	28.8571	4.27135	84
Total_Development_of_school_vision	22.4762	3.94686	84

From this table it can be seen that the highest mean scores were obtained for Instructional leadership and staff development (Mean=68.93), followed by Data-based decision-making (Mean=43.91), School climate and development (Mean=37.17), Community collaboration (Mean=33.08), Communication in diverse environments (Mean=28.86), Resource and facility management (Mean=25.99), Development of school vision (Mean=22.48), and finally, Use of community resources (Mean=14.77).

This means that the school principals are more confident in instructional leadership and staff development compared to other leadership dimensions. The next section looks at relating the different aspects of the leadership efficacy of the secondary school principals to the different variables.

## 5.4 Leadership efficacy by different variables

The different subscales present the results by relating the leadership efficacy of the principals to gender, experience, qualifications, geographical location, school category, school type and leadership style. The following table presents information on leadership efficacy by highest qualification.

### 5.4.1 Leadership efficacy by highest qualification

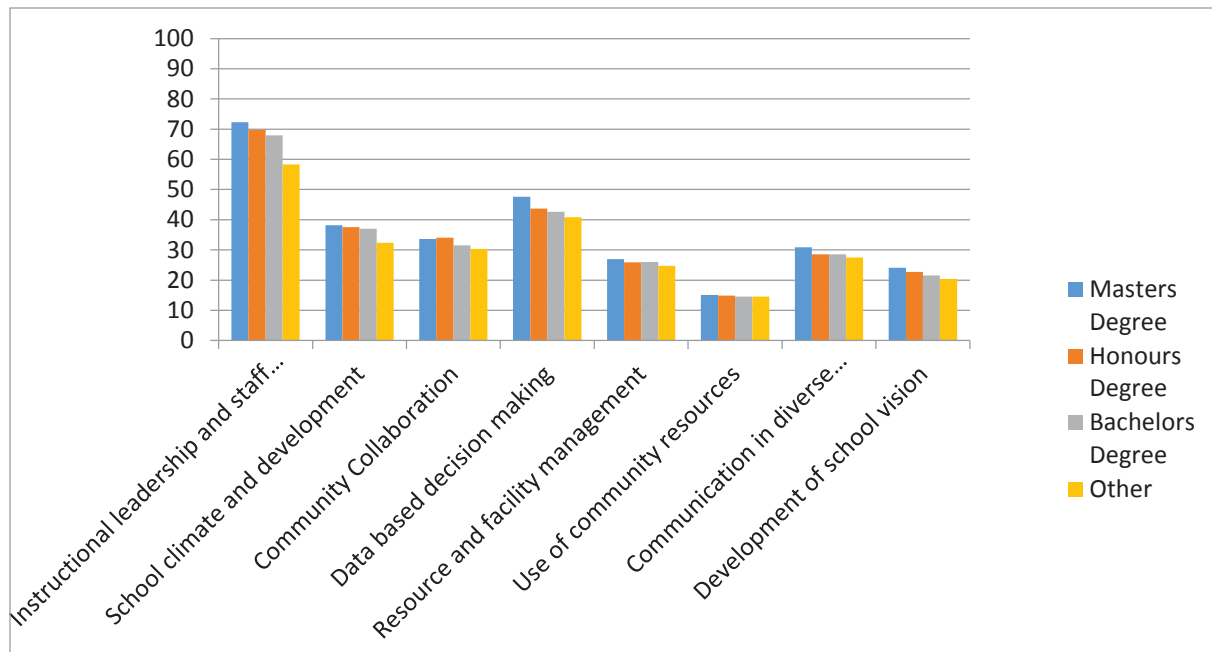
Table 5.25 presents results on the leadership efficacy of school principals by qualification. The school principals with a Master's degree have a high leadership efficacy in seven of the eight subscales when compared to those who have other qualifications. This means the higher the qualification the higher, the self-efficacy of principals in instructional leadership and staff development, school climate development, data-based decision-making, resource and facility management, use of community resources, communication in diverse environment, and development of school vision. Even though based on the results most of the school principals with a Master's degree have the highest leadership efficacy in most subscales, those with an Honours degree show an edge over those in community collaborations. The school principals with a B.Ed. Honours degree show a slightly higher leadership efficacy in this subscale compared to the other principals.

**Table 5.25 Leadership dimensions by highest qualification**

Qualification	Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Master's Degree	72.29	38.14	33.64	47.64	26.93	15.07	30.86	24.07
Honours Degree	69.73	37.59	34.00	43.73	25.86	14.84	28.55	22.70
Bachelors' Degree	68.00	37.00	31.50	42.60	26.00	14.50	28.55	21.50
Other	58.33	32.33	30.33	40.83	24.67	14.50	27.50	20.33

Figure 5.2 below presents this information in the form of a graph.

**Figure 5.2 Leadership dimensions by highest qualification**



The next table, Table 5.26 looks at the experience of school principals and the effect it has on their leadership efficacy.

#### 5.4.2 Leadership efficacy by experience as a principal

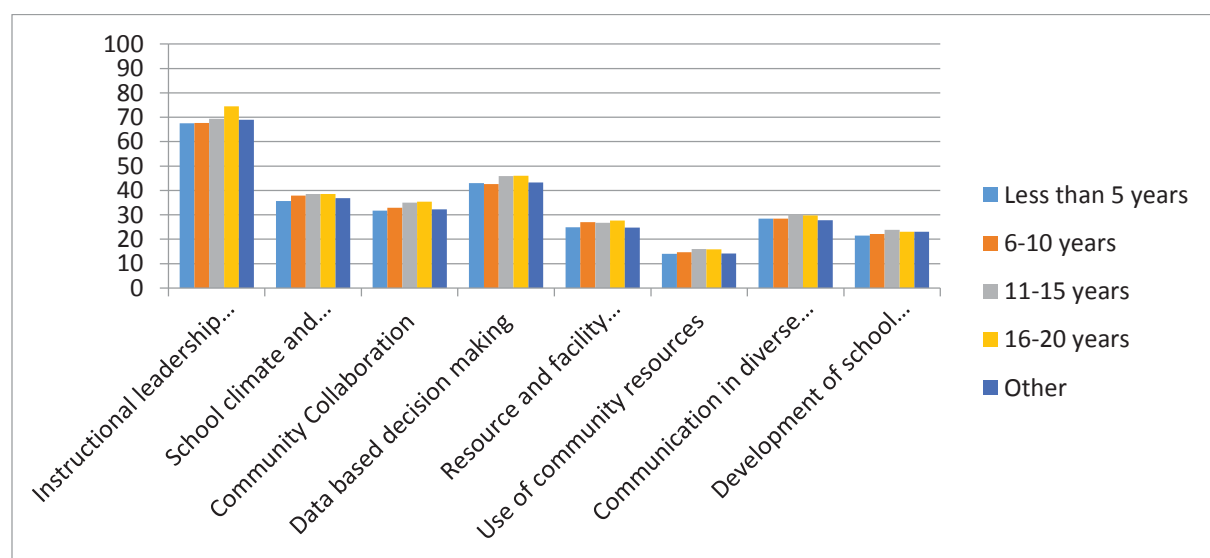
Table 5.26 and Figure 5.3 below, show the leadership efficacy of school principals by experience. The school principals with 16 and 20 years' experience have high leadership efficacy in instructional leadership and staff development. In community collaboration, the leadership efficacy of the same principals is slightly higher compared to the other principals. In school climate and development, community collaboration and data-based decision-making, the leadership efficacy of the principals with between 11 and 15 years' and 16 and 20 years' experiences have higher leadership efficacy compared to the other principals. In resource and facility management, the principals with 16 to 20 years' experience have leadership efficacy that is slightly higher compared to the other principals. In the use of community resources and the development of the school vision, the principals with 11 to 15 years' experience have leadership efficacy that is slightly higher when compared to other principals.

A factorial multivariate analysis of variance was run by the statisticians to determine the effect of the experience of a principal on leadership efficacy. The difference between different years of experience on the combined dependent variables was also not statistically significant. So, there was not difference in the leadership efficacy of school principals by experience.

**Table 5.26 Leadership dimensions by experience**

Your experience as principal		Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Less than 5 years		67.58	35.68	31.68	43.00	24.94	14.00	28.39	21.55
6-10 years		67.63	37.94	32.94	42.63	26.94	14.69	28.44	22.13
11-15 years		69.29	38.53	34.94	45.94	26.71	16.00	30.18	23.82
16-20 years		74.50	38.60	35.40	46.00	27.70	15.80	29.80	23.10
Other		69.00	36.80	32.20	43.20	24.80	14.20	27.80	23.00

In the following figure, Figure 5.3, the information on Table 5.26 is shown by means of a graph.



**Figure 5.3 Leadership dimensions by experience as principal**



### 5.4.3 Leadership efficacy by gender

Table 5.27 and Figure 5.4 show that the leadership efficacy of male school principals is slightly higher in instructional leadership and staff development, school climate development, resource and facility management, and communication in a diverse environment. In community collaboration and data-based decision-making, there is no difference between the leadership of the principals based on gender. In the use of community resources and the development of school vision, the leadership of the female principals is slightly higher than the male principals. This means that female principals are confident in the way in which they use community resources and the development of the school vision, when compared to the male principals.

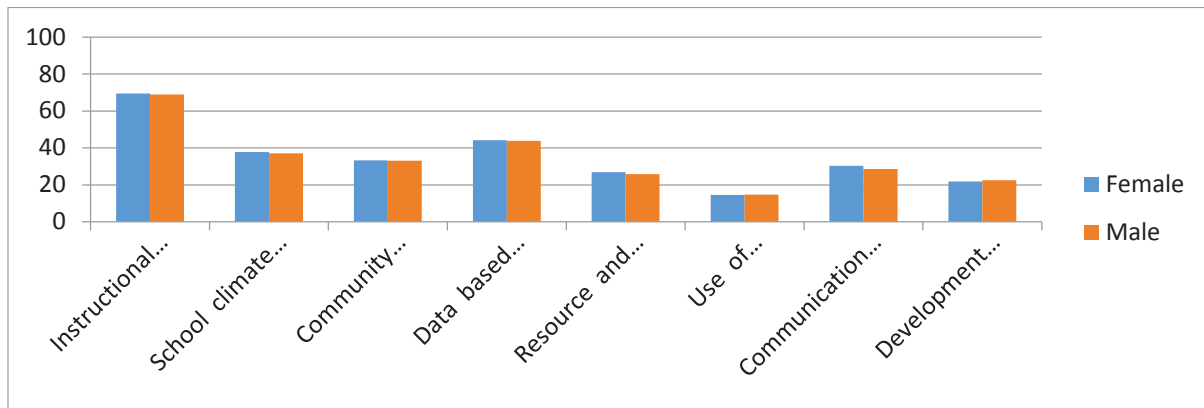
A factorial multivariate analysis of variance was run by the statisticians to determine the effect of the gender of a principal on leadership efficacy. The difference between genders was not statistically significant. Thus, it appears that leadership efficacy did not differ between the principals of different genders

The following table, Table 5.27, focuses on leadership efficacy of school principals by gender.

**Table 5.27 Leadership dimensions by gender**

Your gender		Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data based decision making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
	Female	69.38	37.69	33.31	44.23	26.92	14.62	30.31	21.85
	Male	68.85	37.07	33.04	43.85	25.82	14.80	28.59	22.59

Figure 5.4 below shows the information in Table 5.27 by means of a graph.



**Figure 5.4 Leadership dimensions by gender**

The following table, Table 5.28, presents the results of the effect of school district on the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals.

#### 5.4.4 Leadership dimension by school district

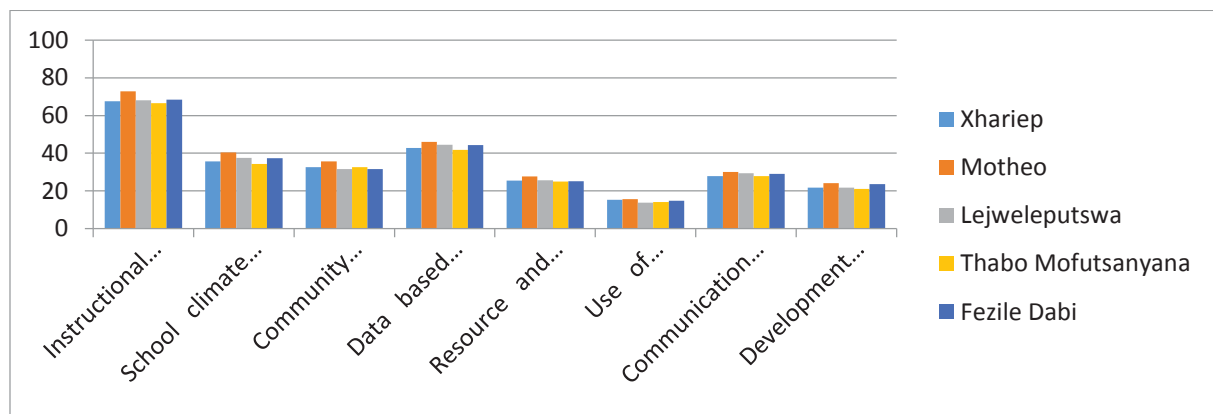
**Table 5.28 Leadership dimension by school district**

School district	Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Xhariep	67.56	35.72	32.56	42.78	25.56	15.22	27.89	21.72
Motheo	72.86	40.41	35.64	45.95	27.73	15.68	30.05	24.14
Lejweleputswa	68.00	37.53	31.67	44.47	25.67	13.73	29.40	21.80
Thabo Mofutsanyana	66.61	34.22	32.61	41.83	25.06	14.06	27.83	21.11
Fezile Dabi	68.36	37.36	31.55	44.27	25.18	14.82	29.00	23.55

When comparing the leadership efficacy of school principals by district, the observation is that the principals in the Motheo District are highly confident in instructional leadership and staff development compared to the principals in the other districts. In other subscales, such as school climate and development, community collaboration, data-based decision-making, resource and facility management, the use

of community resources, and the development of the school vision the leadership efficacy of principals in the Motheo District remains higher than the principals in the other districts. In communication in a diverse environment, the principals in both the Motheo District and the Lejweleputswa District have leadership efficacy that is slightly higher than the principals in the Xhariep, Thabo Mofutsanyane and Fezile Dabi District.

This is shown in Table 5.29 and Figure 5.5 below.



**Figure 5.5 Leadership dimension by school district**

The following table, Table 5.29, focuses on the leadership efficacy of school principals by geographical locations.

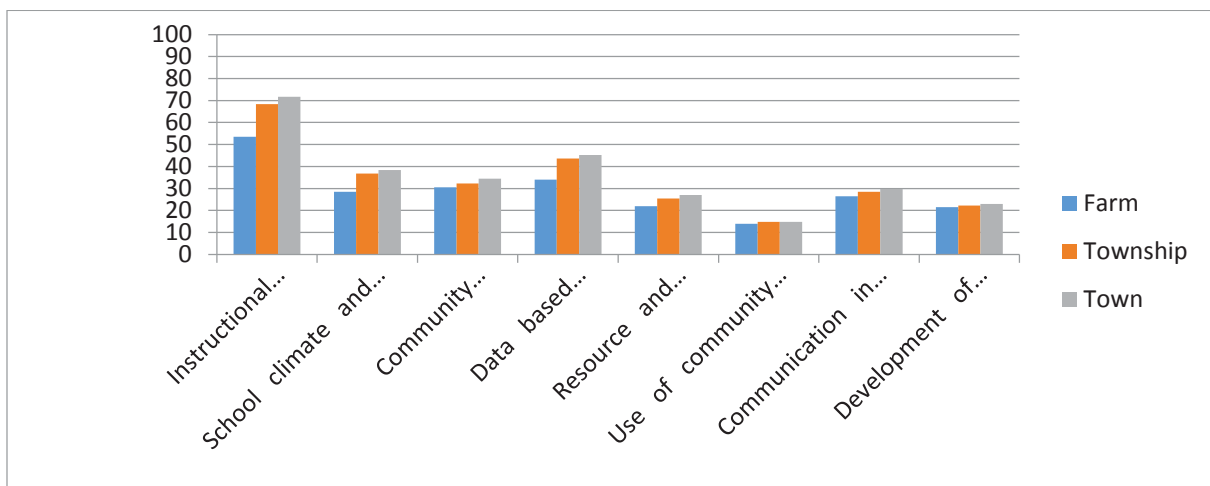
#### 5.4.5 Leadership efficacy by geographical location of school

**Table 5.29 Leadership dimension by geographical location of school**

Geographical location of your school		Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
	Farm	53.50	28.50	30.50	34.00	22.00	14.00	26.50	21.50
	Township	68.34	36.83	32.26	43.68	25.49	14.77	28.47	22.28
	Town	71.65	38.35	34.44	45.29	27.06	14.85	29.74	22.94

The leadership efficacy of school principals by geographical location, as reflected in Table 5.29 and Figure 5.5, indicate that the school principals in town schools have an

edge over the principals in townships schools where leadership efficacy is concerned. This means that the leadership efficacy of the principals in town schools is higher in all the subscales than the leadership efficacy of the principals in township and farm schools. There was not a statistically significant difference between geographical location on the combined variable dependent variable,  $F=0.661$ ;  $p=0.723$ . This means leadership efficacy did not differ between the principals from the different geographical locations.



**Figure 5.6 Leadership dimension by geographical location of school**

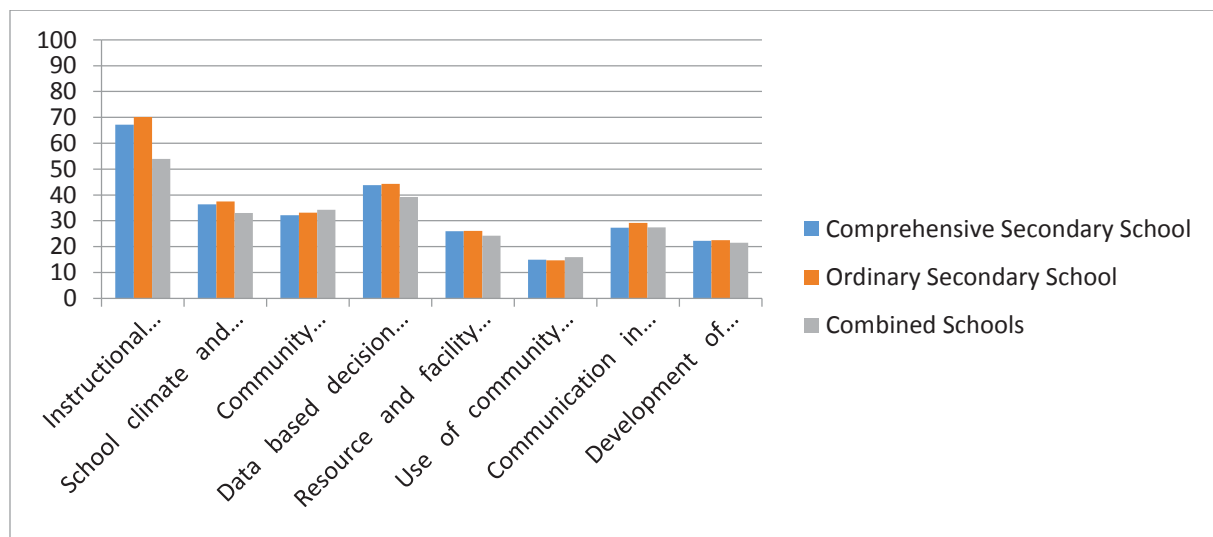
The following table, Table 5.30, illustrates the leadership efficacy of school principals by school category.

#### 5.4.6 Leadership efficacy by school category

**Table 5.30 Leadership dimension by school category**

School Category	Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Comprehensive Secondary School	67.20	36.40	32.20	43.80	26.00	14.90	27.30	22.30
Ordinary Secondary School	70.10	37.46	33.16	44.23	26.04	14.68	29.16	22.55
Combined Schools	54.00	33.00	34.25	39.25	24.25	16.00	27.50	21.50

The principals in the Comprehensive Secondary Schools show high leadership efficacy compared to those in Ordinary Secondary Schools and Combined Schools in the following subscales: instructional leadership and staff development, school climate development, data-based decision-making, and communication in a diverse environment. The principals in the Combined Schools have an edge over the principals in the Comprehensive and Ordinary Secondary Schools in community collaboration and the use of community resources. In resource and facility management and the development of school vision, the principals in the both Comprehensive and Ordinary Secondary Schools have a comparable leadership efficacy that is slightly higher than the leadership efficacy of principals in the Combined Schools. See Table 5.30 above and Figure 5.7 below.



**Figure 5.7 Leadership dimension by school category**

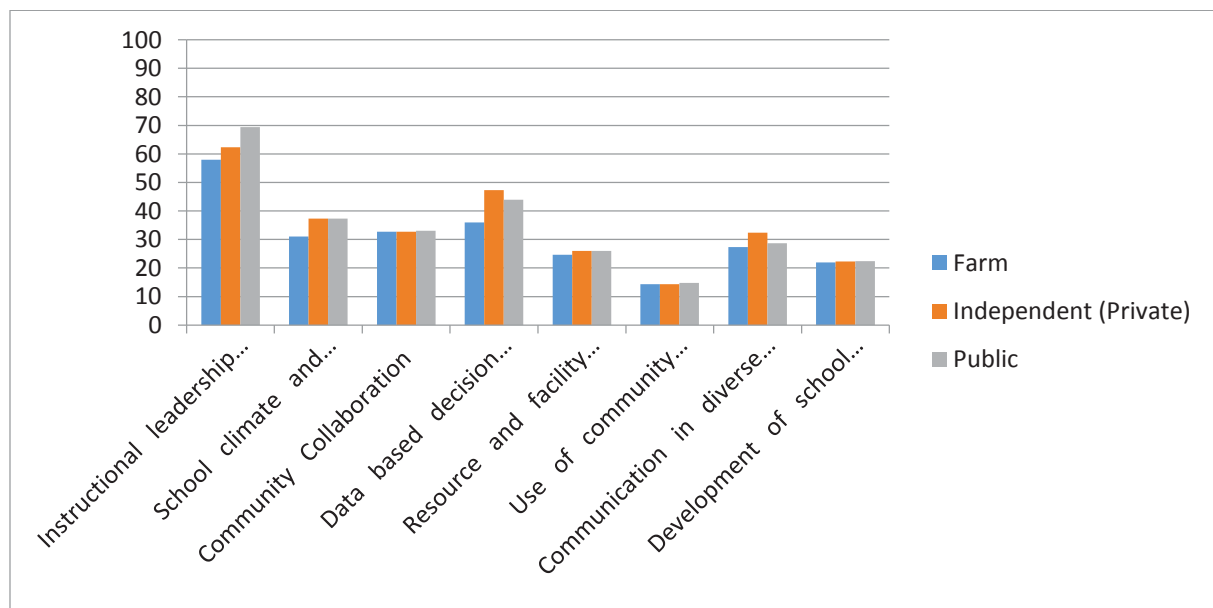
The following table presents information on the leadership efficacy of school principals by school type.

### 5.4.7 Leadership efficacy by school type

**Table 5.31 Leadership dimension by school type**

School Type	Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Farm	58.00	31.00	32.67	36.00	24.67	14.33	27.33	22.00
Independent (Private)	62.33	37.33	32.67	47.33	26.00	14.33	32.33	22.33
Public	69.35	37.26	33.04	43.92	25.97	14.73	28.70	22.43

Table 5.31 above and Figure 5.8 (see figure below) illustrate that the leadership efficacy of the principals in the Public Schools is very high in instructional leadership and staff development compared to those in the Independent and Farms Schools. In data-based decision-making and communication in a diverse environment, the principals in the Independent or Private Schools show a high leadership efficacy compared to those in the Public and Farm Schools. In school climate and development, resource and facility management, and the development of a school vision, the leadership efficacy of principals in the Independent and Public Schools is comparable and is higher than the leadership efficacy of those in the Farm Schools.



**Figure 5.8 Leadership dimension by school type**

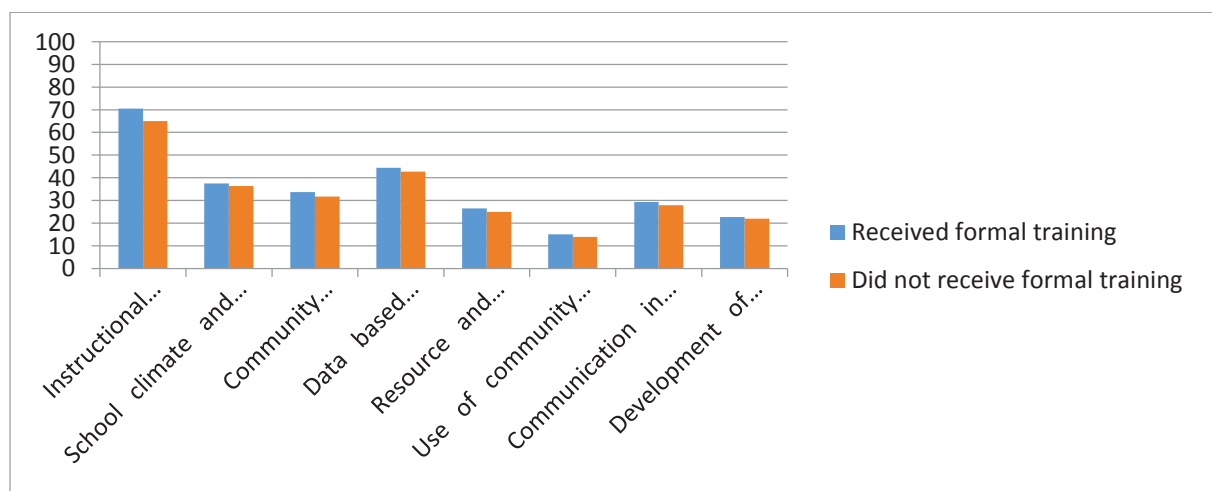
The following table provides the responses of school principals on the type of formal training received by them on management and leadership before they were appointed as principals.

### 5.5 Formal training in school management prior to principal-ship

**Table 5.32 Formal training in school management prior to principal-ship**

Training is School Management		Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data - based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Received formal training		70.50	37.52	33.62	44.40	26.43	15.10	29.23	22.68
Did not receive formal training		65.00	36.29	31.75	42.67	24.88	13.96	27.92	21.96

Table 5.32 shows, based on the responses of the school principals, that they attended training school management before they were appointed as principals. The leadership of school principals who received formal training prior to being employed as principals is high in all subscales compared to those who did not receive formal training. This is indicative of the fact that competent school principals are confident in the performance of their duties as a principal. Figure 5.9 shows this by means of a graph.



**Figure 5.9 Formal Training in School Management Prior to Principal-ship**

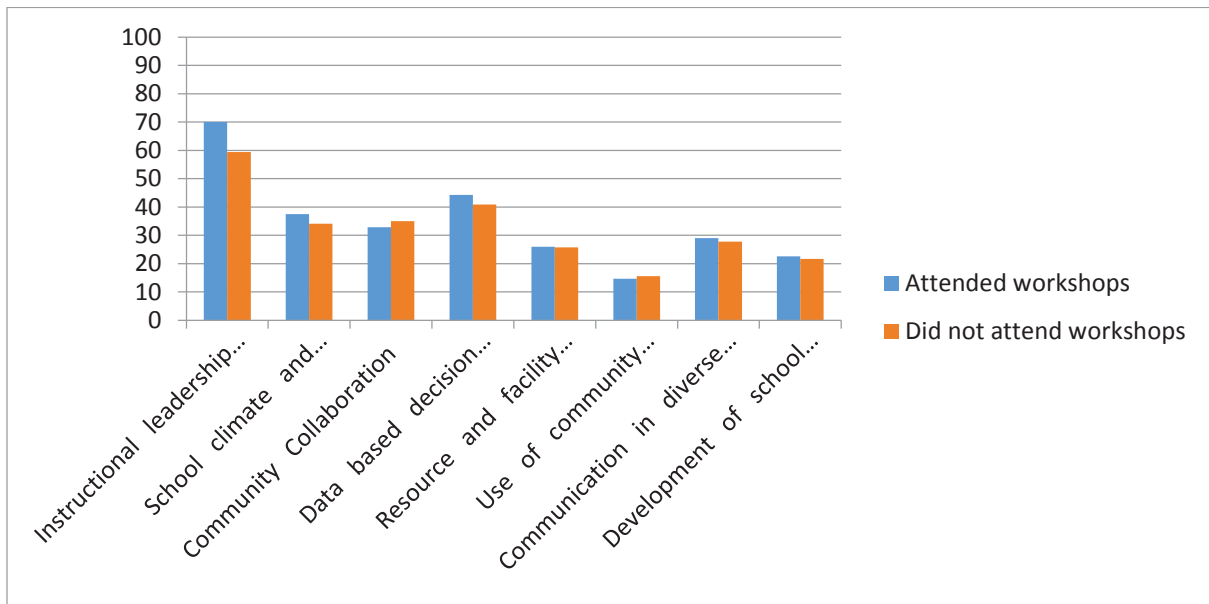
The following table, Table 5.33, illustrates a comparison between the leadership efficacy of the principals who attended workshops in school management in their tenure as principal.

**Table 5.33 Workshops in school management during tenure as principal**

Attendance of workshops		Instructional leadership and staff development	School climate and development	Community Collaboration	Data-based decision-making	Resource and facility management	Use of community resources	Communication in diverse environment	Development of school vision
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Have you attended workshops in school management during your tenure as principal?	Yes	70.07	37.53	32.85	44.27	26.01	14.68	28.99	22.57
	No	59.44	34.11	35.00	40.89	25.78	15.56	27.78	21.67
		68.93	37.17	33.08	43.90	25.99	14.77	28.86	22.48

The leadership efficacy of the Secondary School principals who attended workshops in school management during their tenure as principal is high in instructional leadership and staff development, school climate and development of data-based decision-making, communication in a diverse environment, and the development of school vision. The principals who did not attend workshops have a slightly higher leadership efficacy in the following subscales: community collaboration and communication in a diverse environment. In resource and facility management, the school principals have a comparable leadership efficacy at an overall mean of 26.01 and 25.78 respectively. Figure 5.10 below presents the information shown in Table 5.33 above by means of a graph.



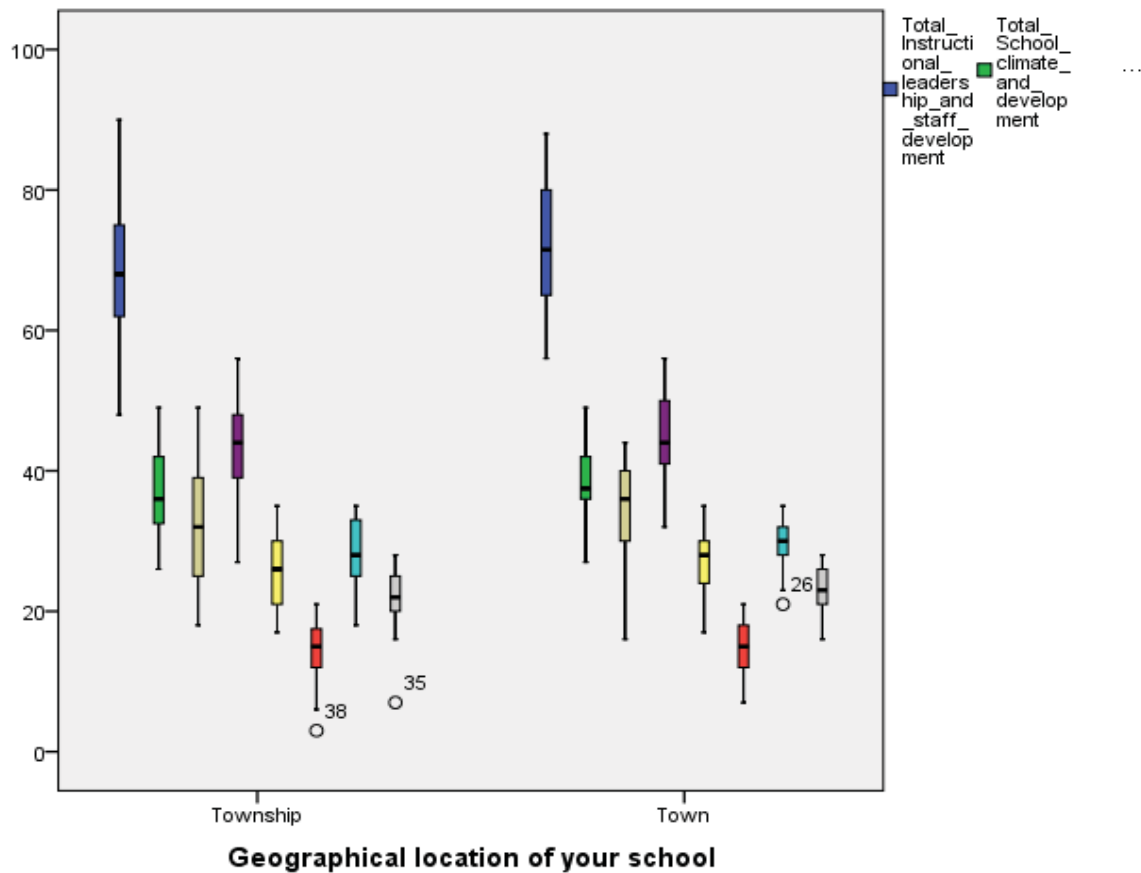


**Figure 5.10 Workshops in School Management during Tenure as Principal**

## **5.6 Assumptions for Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)**

### **5.6.1 Checking for univariate outliers**

An outlier refers to a data point that falls for outside the main distribution of scores. Depending on how extreme it is and the total number of scores in the distribution, an outlier can distort the statistical analysis that includes the actual values of all the scores, such as the mean and the standard deviation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:180).

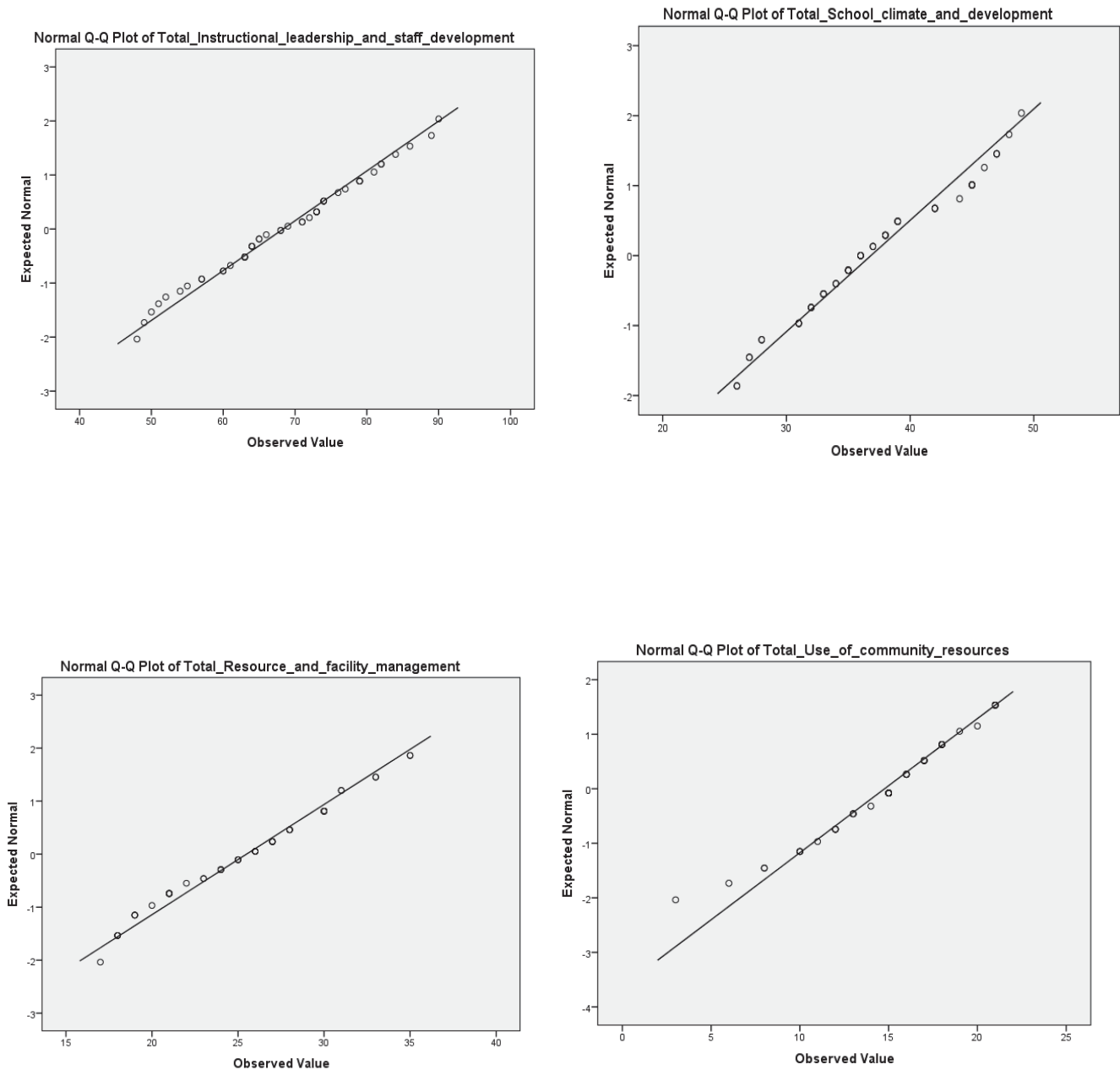


**Figure 5.11 Checking univariate outliers**

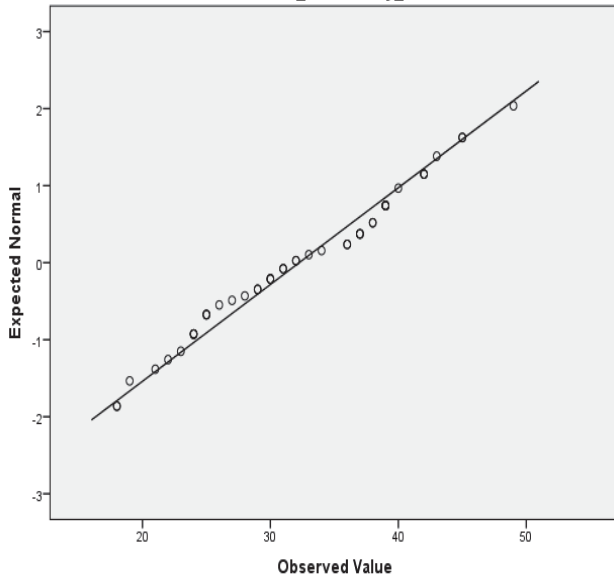
Univariate outliers were inspected by means of boxplots, with any values greater than 1.5 box lengths away from the edge of the box classified as moderate outliers, and values greater than 3 box lengths away from the box classified as extreme outliers. As can be seen in the boxplot in Figure 5.11 above, there were three moderate outliers in the data. The moderate outliers were not expected to influence results, thus these cases were kept in the dataset.

## 5.6.2 Checking for normality

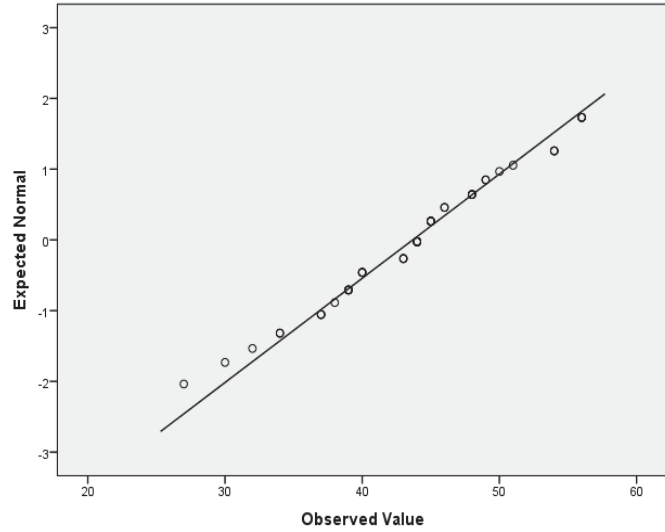
### 5.6.2.1 Normal Q-Q Plots: Geographical location of the school = Township



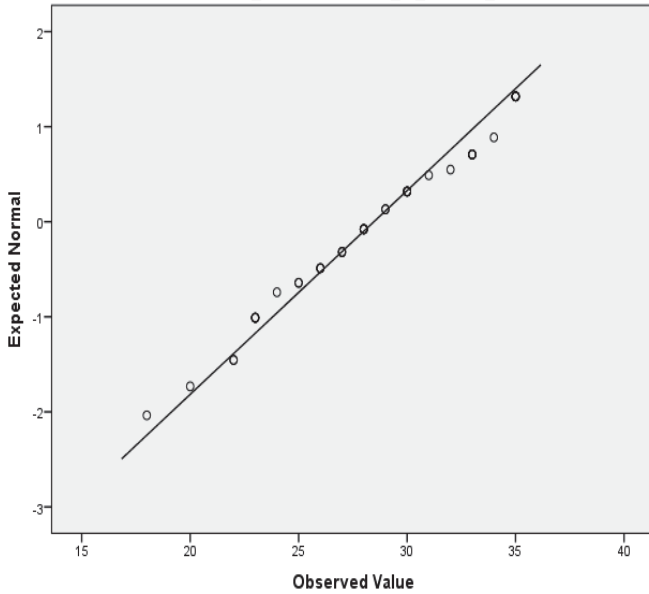
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Community\_Collaboration



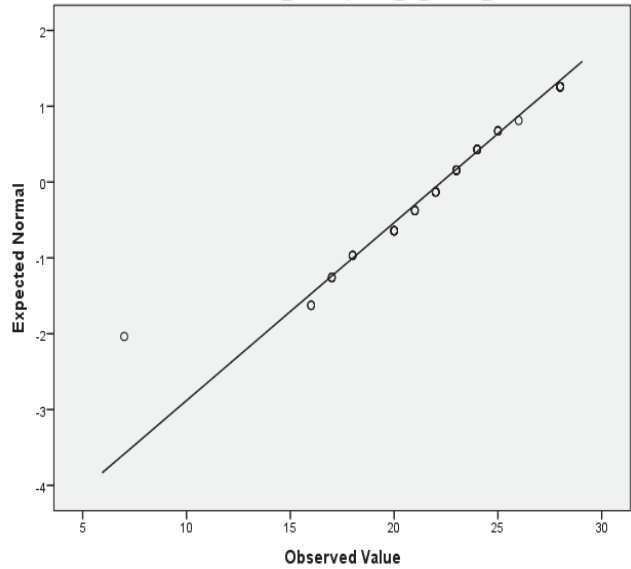
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Data\_based\_decision\_making



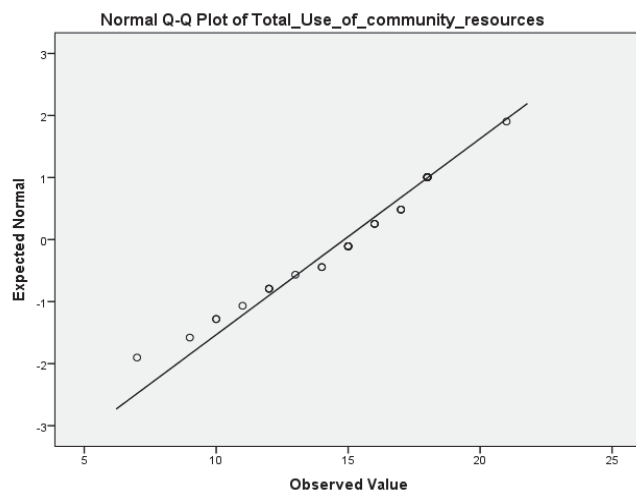
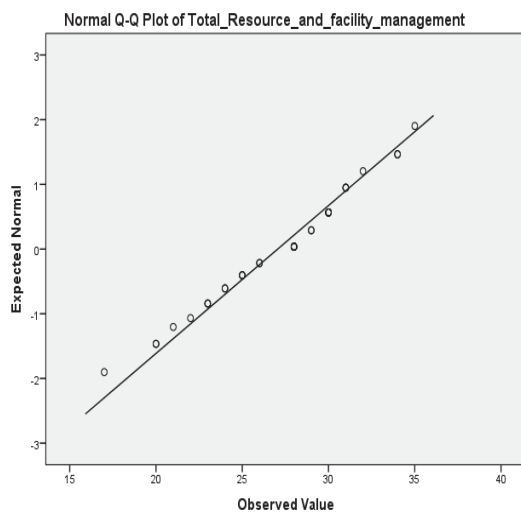
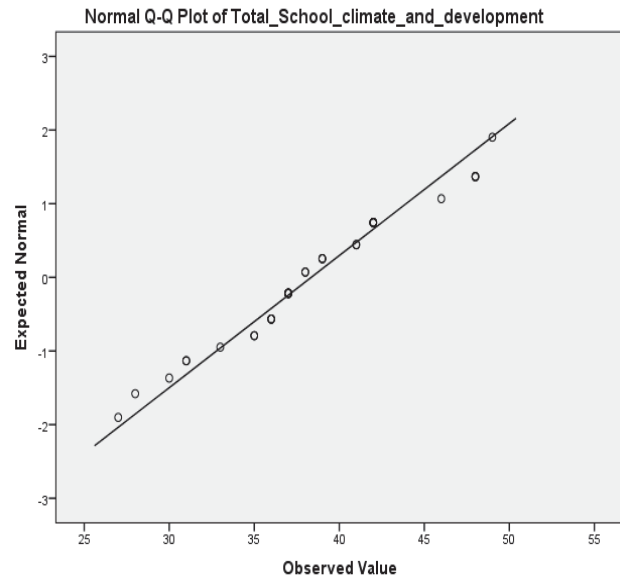
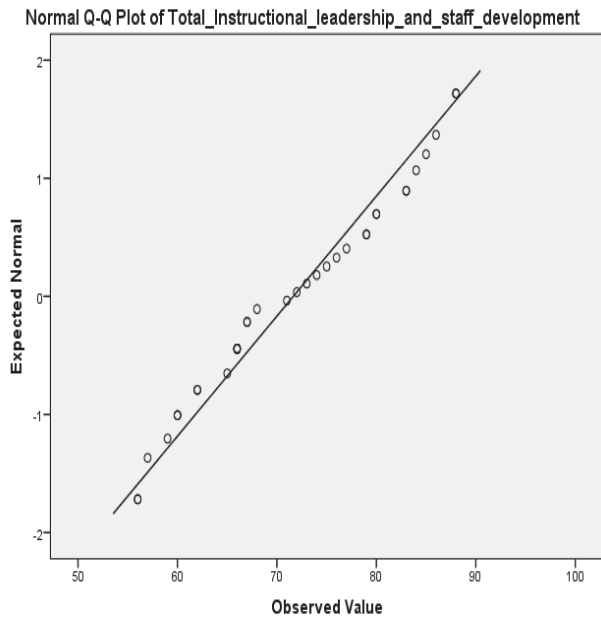
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Communication\_in\_diverse\_environment

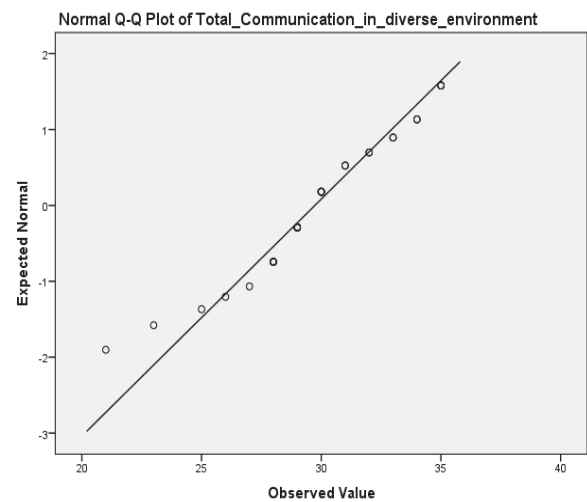
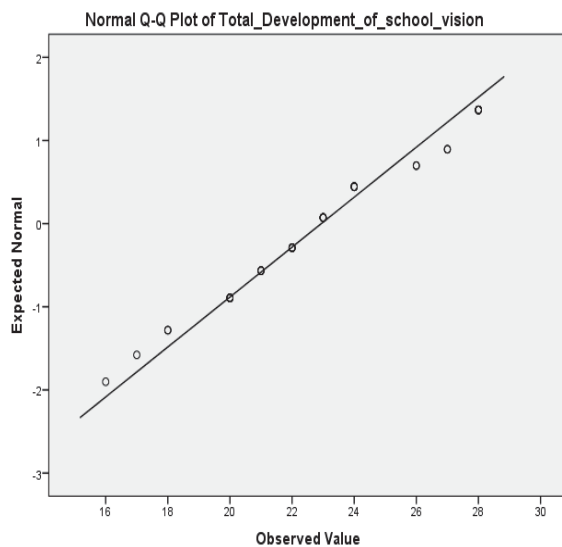
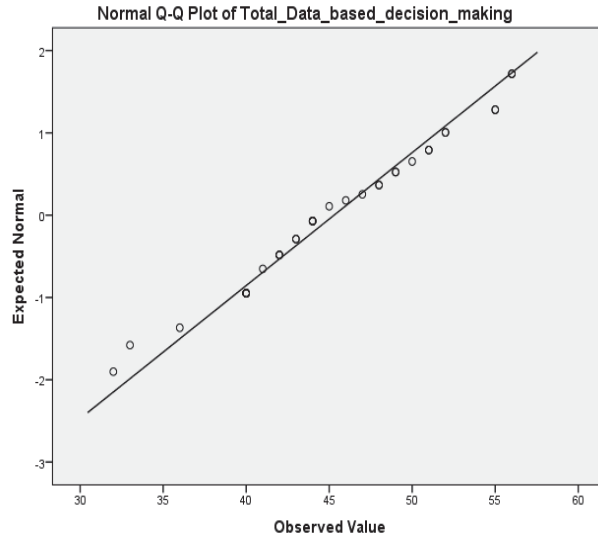
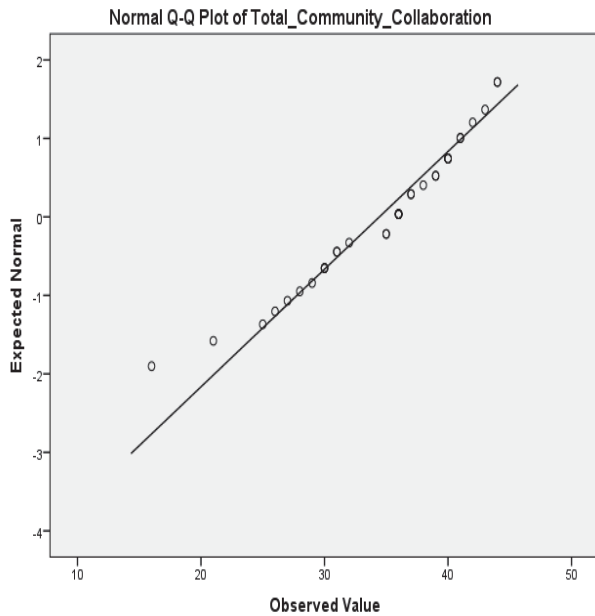


Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Development\_of\_school\_vision



### 5.6.2.2 Normal QQ plots: Geographical location of the school = Town





Normality was checked via the use of Normal Q-Q Plots, as shown in Normal QQ Plots above. MANOVA requires that there be approximate normal distribution as it is quite robust to deviations from normality. If the data points follow in an approximately straight diagonal line, it can be assumed that the data is normally distributed. As can be seen above, the data is approximately normally distributed and a MANOVA can be run.

### 5.6.3 Checking for linearity

From the scatter plots in Figure 5.12 below it can be seen that there was no indication of non-linear relationships between any of the dependent variables, within any of the groups of the independent variables.

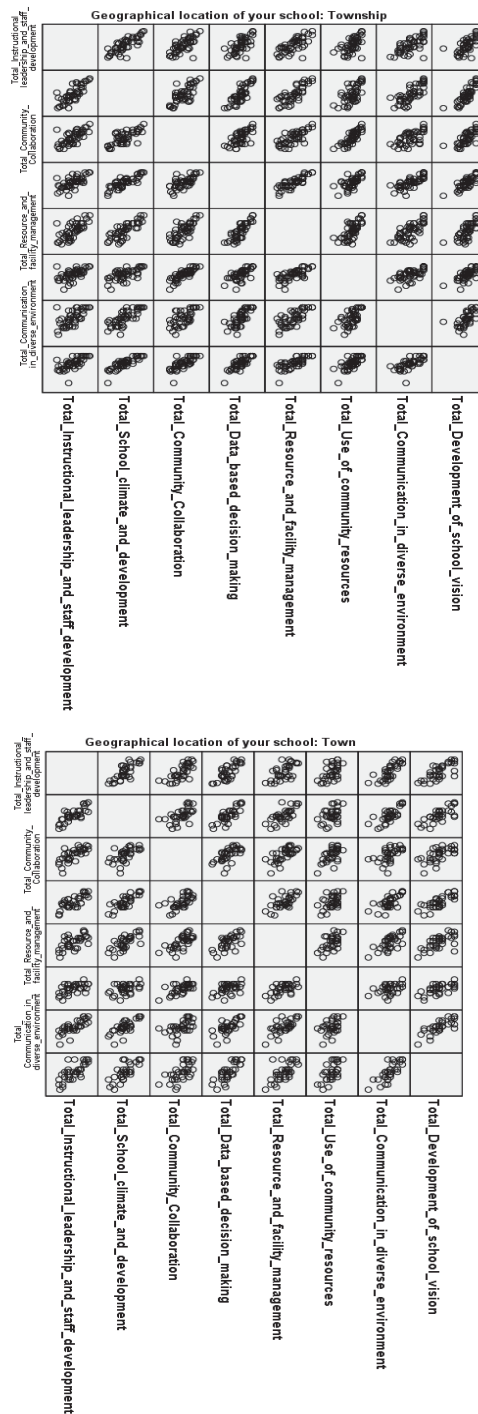


Figure 5.12 Checking for linearity

Scatterplots are used to measure relationships. The scatter plot is a graphic representation of the relationship, achieved by forming a visual array of the intersection of each subject's scores on the two variable. One variable is rank ordered on the horizontal axis and the second variable is rank ordered on the vertical axis. Each subject's scores are indicated next to the graph in random order and the intersections are noted by the letter assigned to each subject. Scatterplots are useful in identifying outliers. Several different types of patterns can emerge in scatterplots. When one variable decreases as the other increases, there is a negative relationship. The direction of the pattern in the scatterplots then indicates whether there is a relationship and whether the relationship is positive.

#### 5.6.4 Checking for multicollinearity

Correlations between dependent variables of greater than 0.9 would indicate multicollinearity. There was no multicollinearity, as assessed by Pearson's correlation.

#### 5.6.5 Checking for multivariate outliers

##### *Checking for the equality of variance-covariance matrices*

**Table 5.34 - Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices<sup>a</sup>**

Box's M	42.241
F	1.042
df1	36
df2	17048.364
Sig.	.400

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Geo\_location

There was homogeneity of variance covariances matrices, as assessed by Box's test of equality of covariance matrices ( $p=0.4$ ), therefore this assumption has not been violated.



## 5.6.6 Assumption of homogeneity of variances

**Table 5.35 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup>**

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Total_Instructional_leadership_and_staff_development	.145	1	79	.704
Total_School_climate_and_development	1.044	1	79	.310
Total_Community_Collaboration	2.436	1	79	.123
Total_Data_based_decision_making	.042	1	79	.838
Total_Resource_and_facility_management	.438	1	79	.510
Total_Use_of_community_resources	1.604	1	79	.209
Total_Communication_in_diverse_environment	7.970	1	79	.006
Total_Development_of_school_vision	1.248	1	79	.267

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Geo\_location

From the table above, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated for Communication in Diverse Environment ( $p=0.006$ ) as assessed by Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance. In order to correct for this violation, a stricter alpha value will be used when determining statistical significance ( $\alpha=0.01$  rather than 0.05). In addition, Games-Howell post hoc tests will be conducted instead of Tukey post hoc tests.

## 5.7 Results for MANOVA (Dependent variables: Subscales; Independent variable: Geographic Location)

In order to run a MANOVA, there needs to be more individuals in every group of the independent variables than the number of dependent variables. In some cases the MANOVA could not be run and the statistical significance could not be measured because the number of respondents was not enough.

**Table 5.36 Results for MANOVA – Geographical Location**

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.984	561.954 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.000	.984
	Wilks' Lambda	.016	561.954 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.000	.984
	Hotelling's Trace	62.439	561.954 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.000	.984
	Roy's Largest Root	62.439	561.954 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.000	.984
Geo_location	Pillai's Trace	.068	.661 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.723	.068
	Wilks' Lambda	.932	.661 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.723	.068
	Hotelling's Trace	.073	.661 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.723	.068
	Roy's Largest Root	.073	.661 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	72.000	.723	.068
a. Design: Intercept + Geo_location							
b. Exact statistic							

As can be seen in the row highlighted in blue in the table above, there was not a statistically significant difference between the geographic location on the combined dependent variable,  $F=0.661$ ;  $p=0.723$ . This means that there was no difference in the leadership efficacy of school principals from the different geographical locations.

### **5.7.1 Summary of the MANOVA results**

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance was run to determine the effect of geographic location on leadership efficacy. Eight measures of leadership efficacy were assessed: Total scores for Instructional Leadership and Staff Development; School Climate and Development; Community Collaboration; Data-Based Decision-Making Aligned with Legal and Ethical Principles; Resources and Facility Management; Use of Community Resources; Communication in a Diverse Environment; Development of School Vision. Principals came from two geographic locations: Towns and Townships. Preliminary assumption checking revealed that data was normally distributed, as assessed by Normal Q-Q Plots; there were no extreme univariate or multivariate outliers, as assessed by boxplots and Mahalanobis distance ( $p > 0.001$ ), respectively; there were linear relationships, as assessed by scatterplots; there was no multicollinearity; and there was homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, as assessed by Box's M test ( $p = 0.4$ ). The differences between geographic locations on the combined dependent variables was not statistically significant,  $F=0.661$ ;  $p=0.723$ . Thus, it seems that leadership efficacy did not differ between the principals from the different geographical locations.

## **5.8 Assumptions for Factorial MANOVA (Dependent variables: Leadership efficacy subscales, Independent variables: Gender and Experience as a manager)**

### **5.8.1 Sample size**

In order to run a MANOVA, there needs to be more individuals in every group of the independent variables than the number of dependent variables.

## Gender

**Table 5.37 Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Your gender	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
Total_Instructional_leadership_and_staff_development	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_School_climate_and_development	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_Community_Collaboration	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_Data_based_decision_making	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_Resource_and_facility_management	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_Use_of_community_resources	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_Communication_in_diverse_environment	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
Total_Development_of_school_vision	Female	13	100.0%	0	0.0%	13	100.0%
	Male	71	100.0%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%

From the table above it can be seen that for the independent variable "Gender", there were more than eight individuals in each of the groups (males and females). Thus, sample size was not a problem here.

## Experience as principal

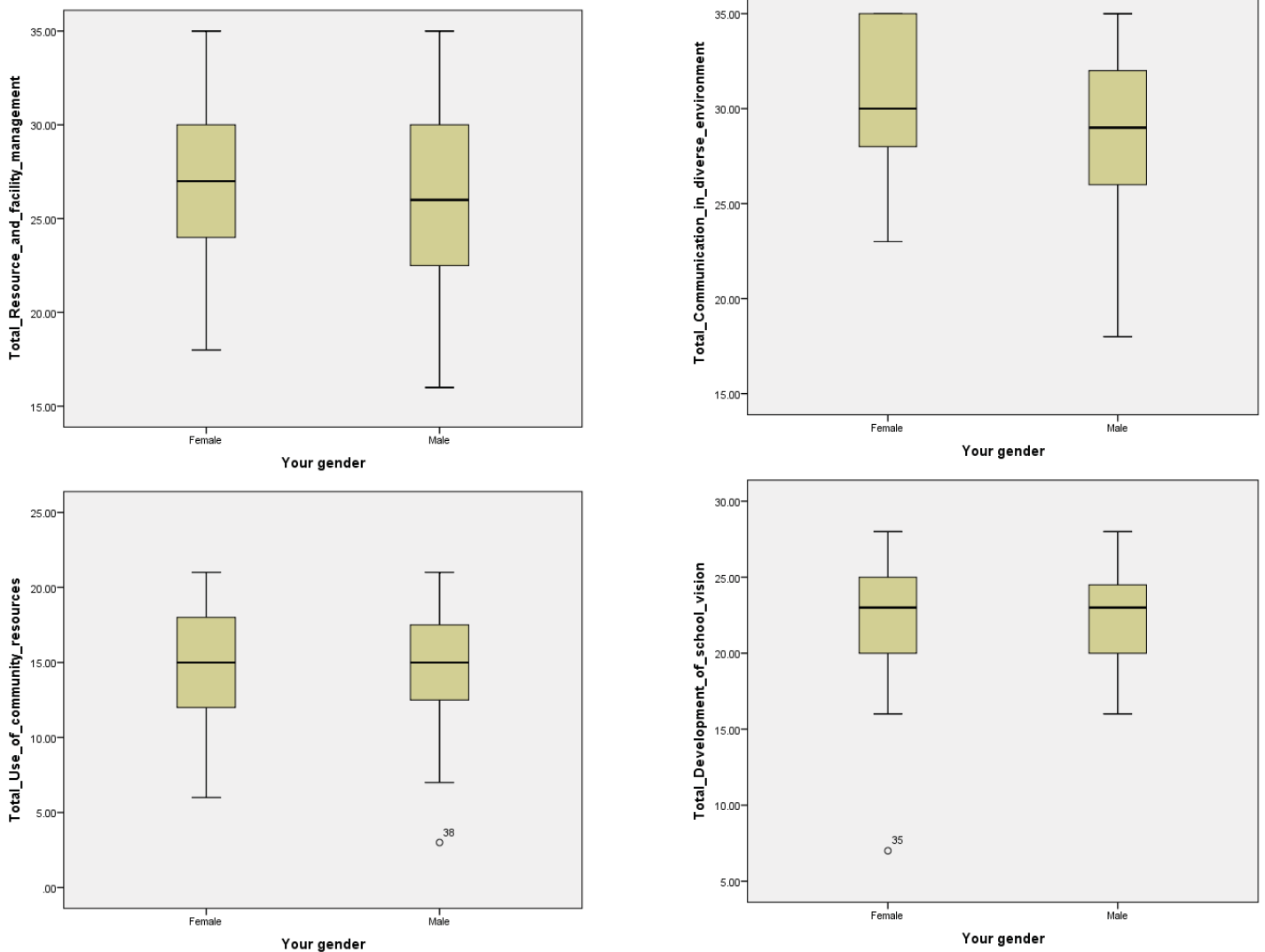
**Table 5.38 Case Processing Summary**

Experience_recoded		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Total_Instructional_leadership_and_staff_development	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_School_climate_and_development	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_Community_Collaboration	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_Data_based_decision_making	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_Resource_and_facility_management	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_Use_of_community_resources	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_Communication_in_diverse_environment	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Total_Development_of_school_vision	Less than 5 years	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
	6 to 15 years	33	100.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
	16 years or more	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%

From the table above it can be seen that for the independent variable "Experience", there were more than eight individuals in each of the groups (different years of experience). Thus, the sample size was not a problem here.

## 5.9 Outliers

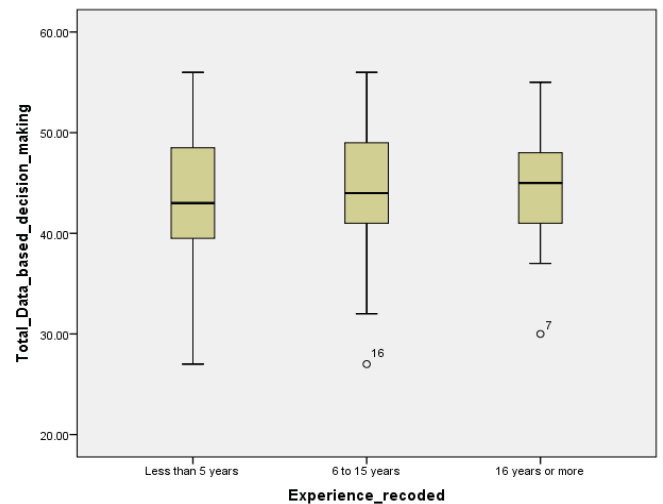
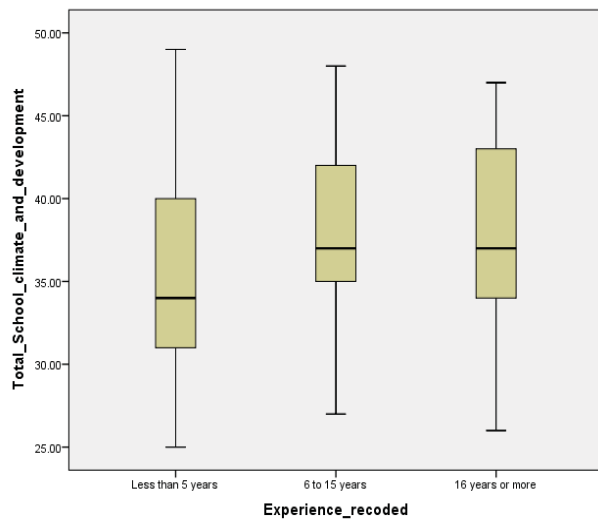
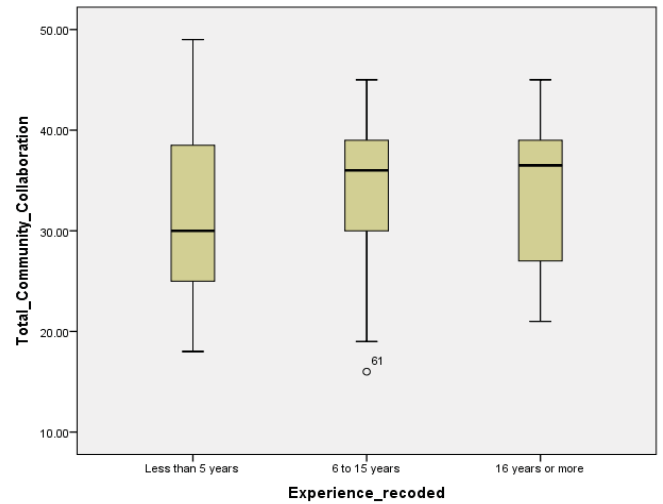
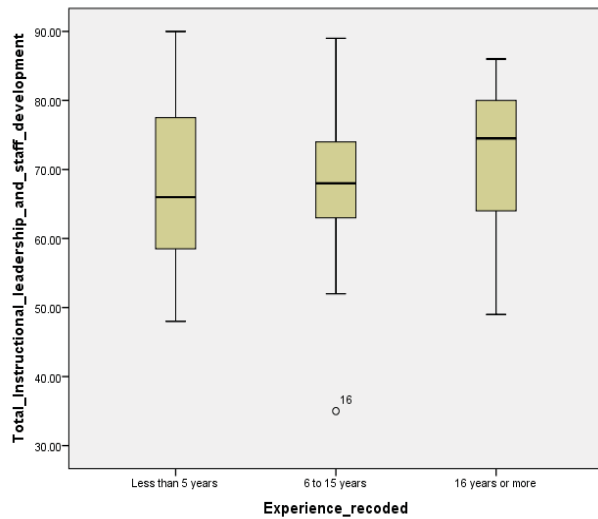
### Gender

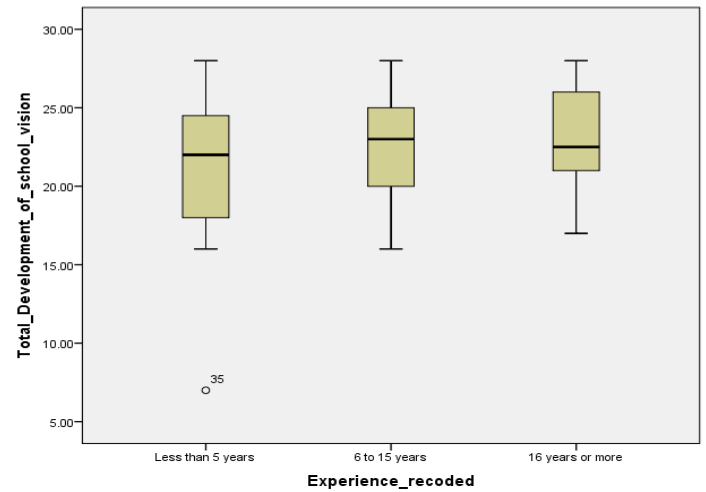
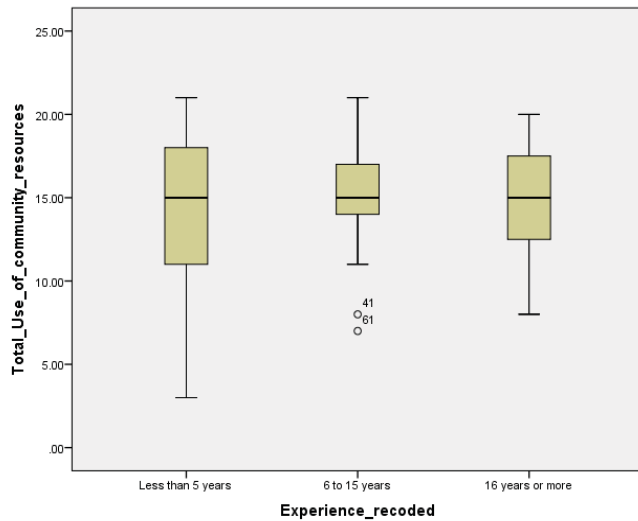
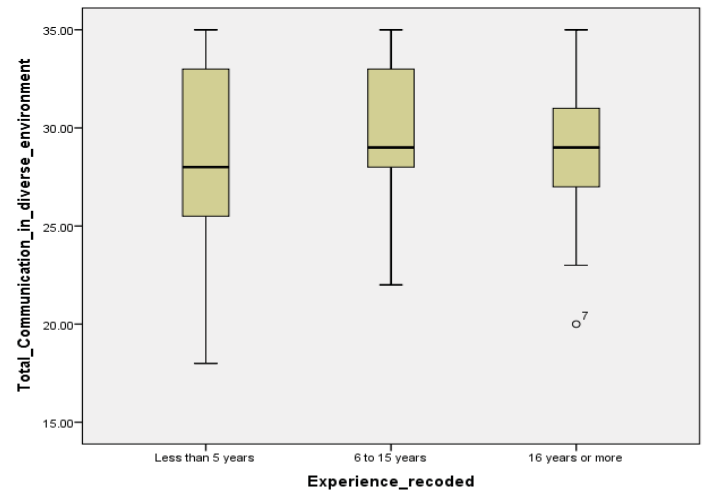
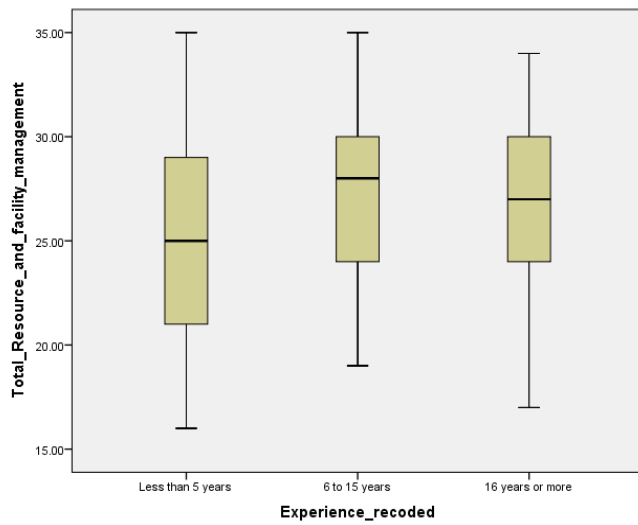


The eight dependent variables were examined for outliers by making use of boxplots. From the boxplots above it can be seen that there were no extreme outliers, but there were five moderate outliers in the data. Only one of these cases, however, presented an outlier for two dependent variables. Due to the fact that these outliers were not due to data entry errors, but represented actual data points, it was decided not to delete

them from the analysis. Overall the observations were about equally above and below the mode.

## Experience





The eight dependent variables were examined for outliers by making use of boxplots. From the boxplots above it can be seen that there were no extreme outliers, but there were a number of moderate outliers in the data, with three cases being outliers for two dependent variables. As these outliers were not due to data entry errors, but represented actual data points, it was decided not to delete them from the analysis. Overall the observations were about equally above and below the mode.

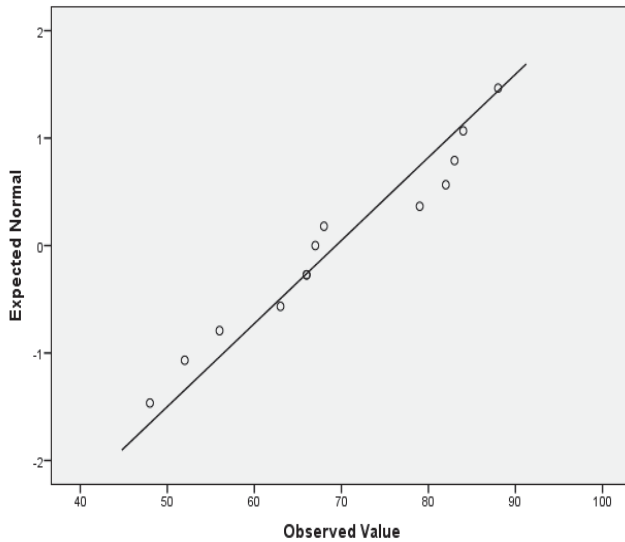


## 5.10 Assessing Normality

### Gender

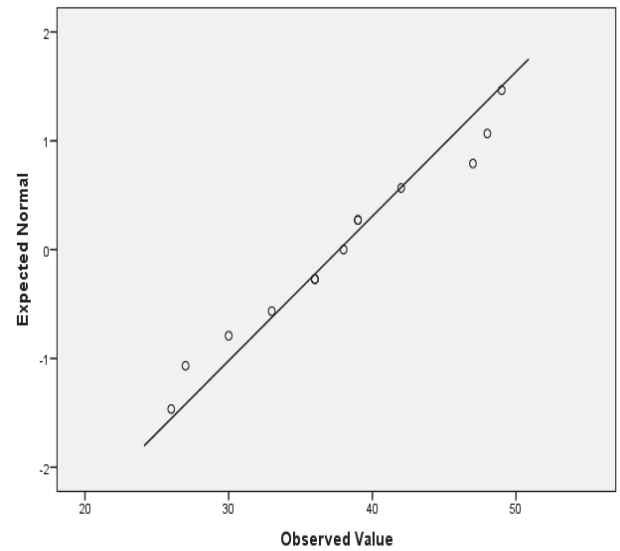
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Instructional\_leadership\_and\_staff\_development

for Gender= Female



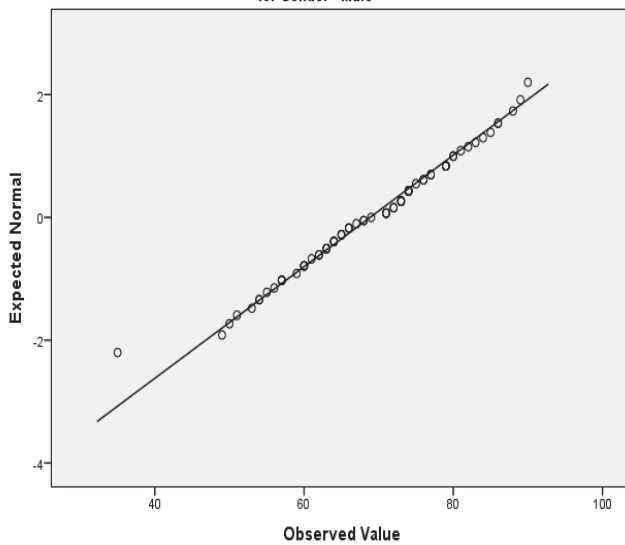
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_School\_climate\_and\_development

for Gender= Female



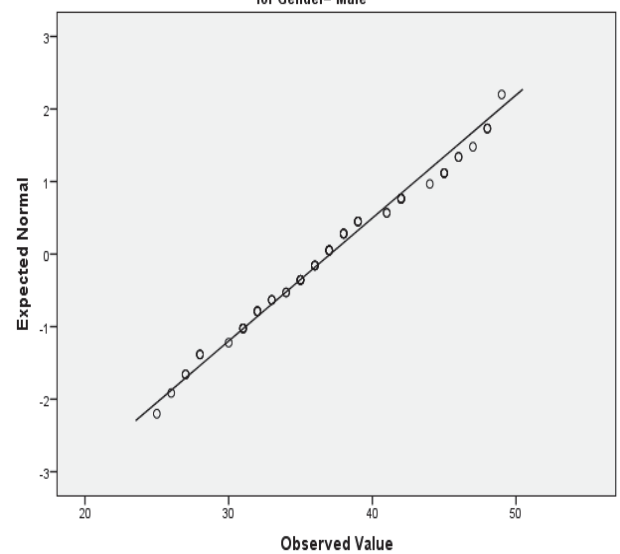
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Instructional\_leadership\_and\_staff\_development

for Gender= Male

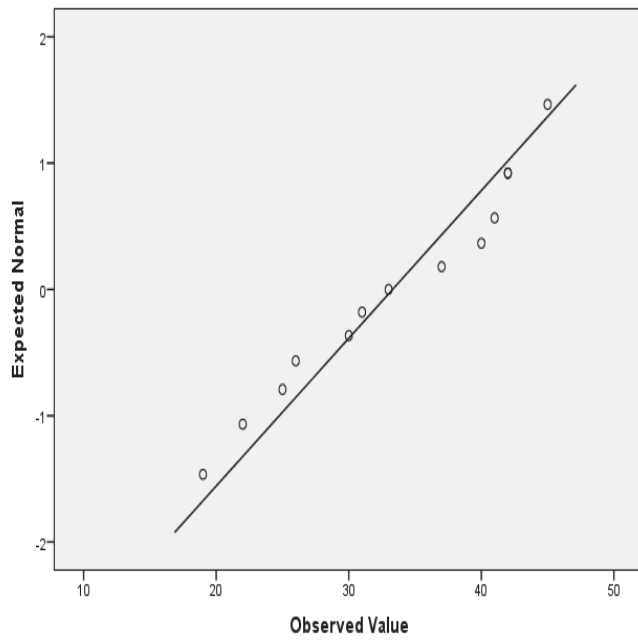


Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_School\_climate\_and\_development

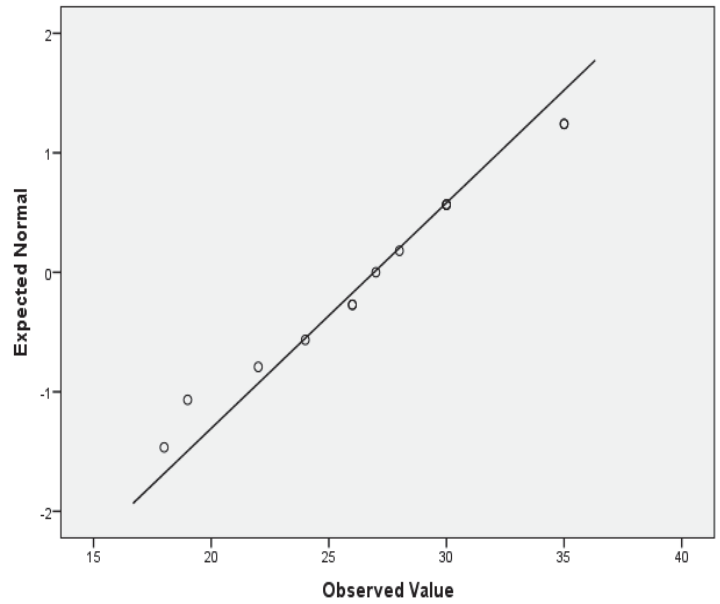
for Gender= Male



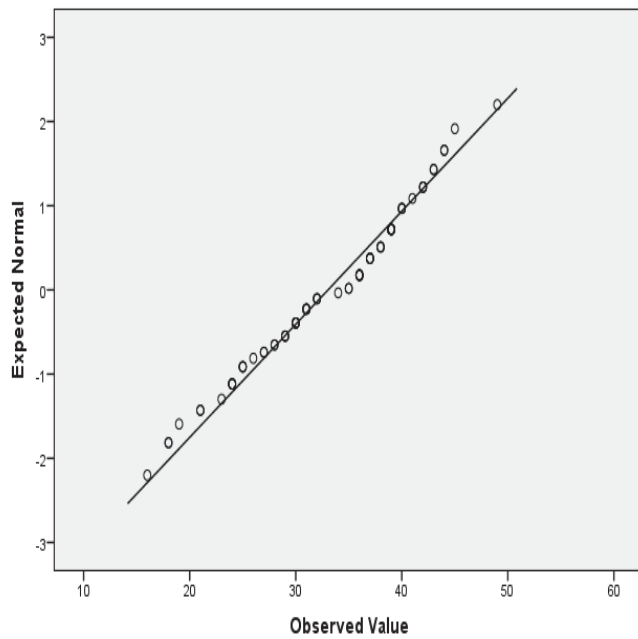
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Community\_Collaboration  
for Gender= Female



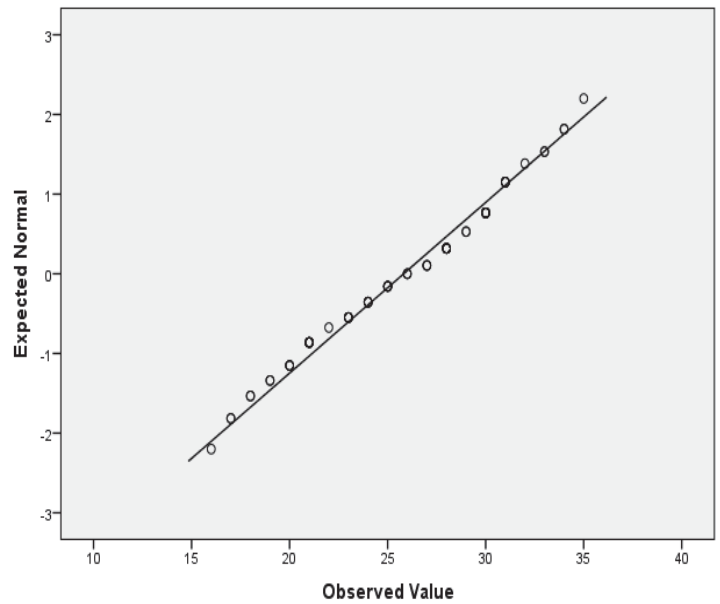
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Resource\_and\_facility\_management  
for Gender= Female



Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Community\_Collaboration  
for Gender= Male

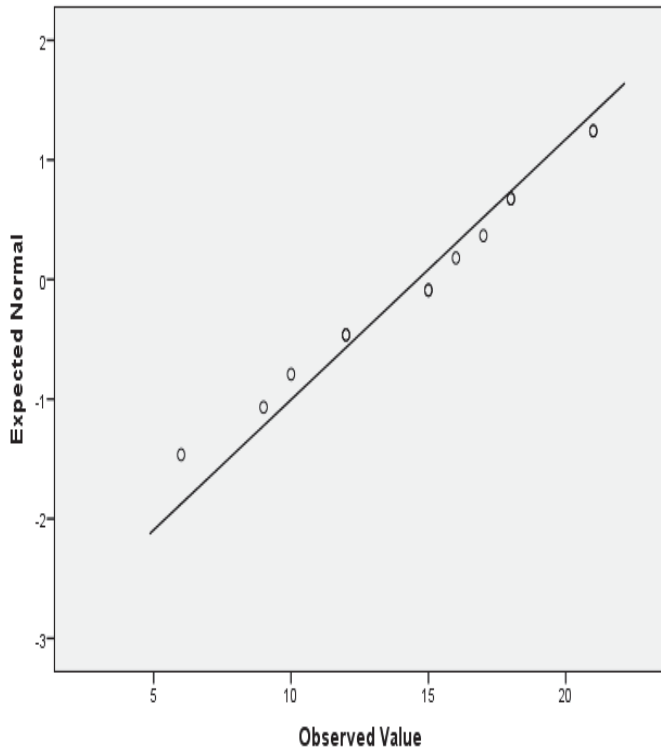


Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Resource\_and\_facility\_management  
for Gender= Male



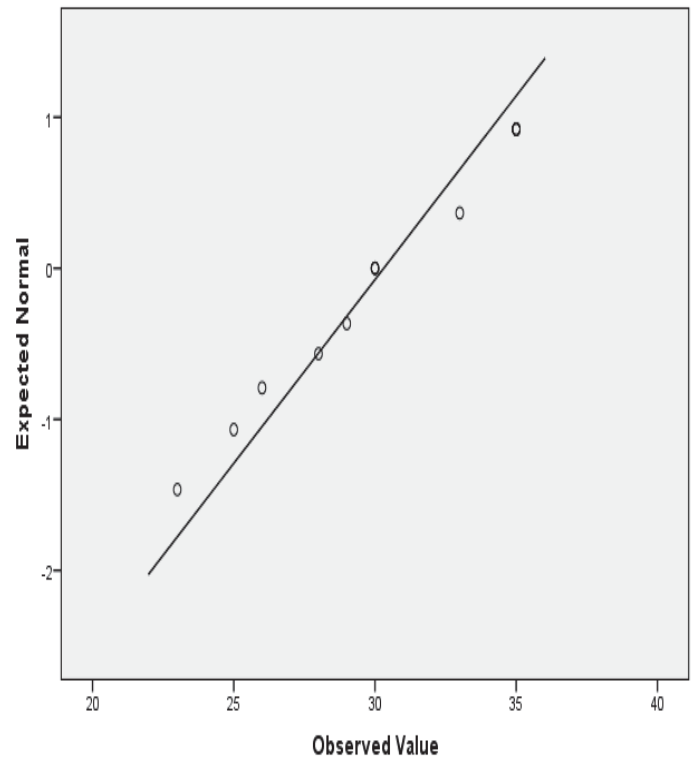
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Use\_of\_community\_resources

for Gender= Female



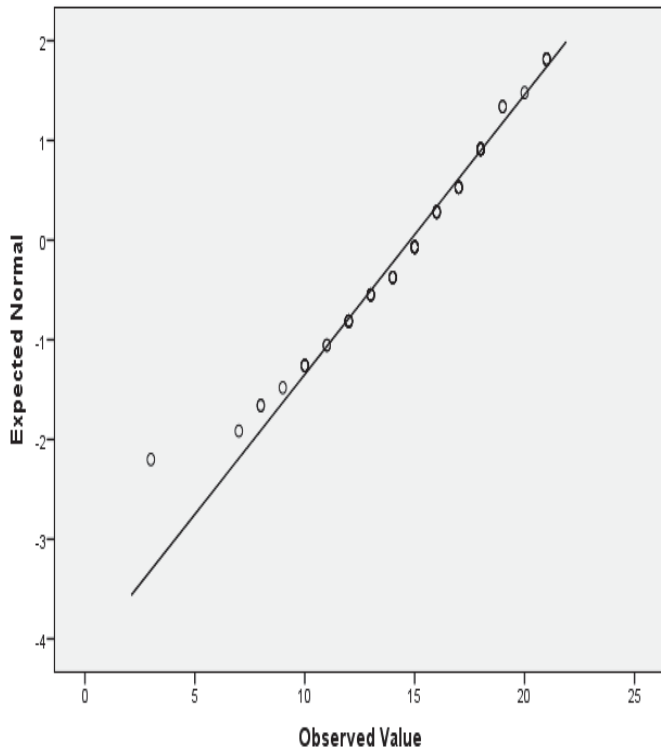
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Communication\_in\_diverse\_environment

for Gender= Female



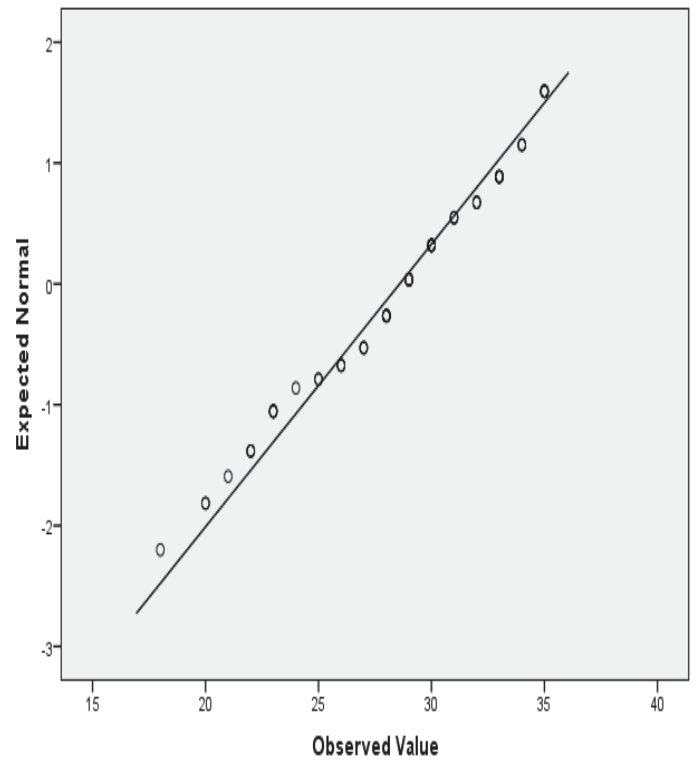
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Use\_of\_community\_resources

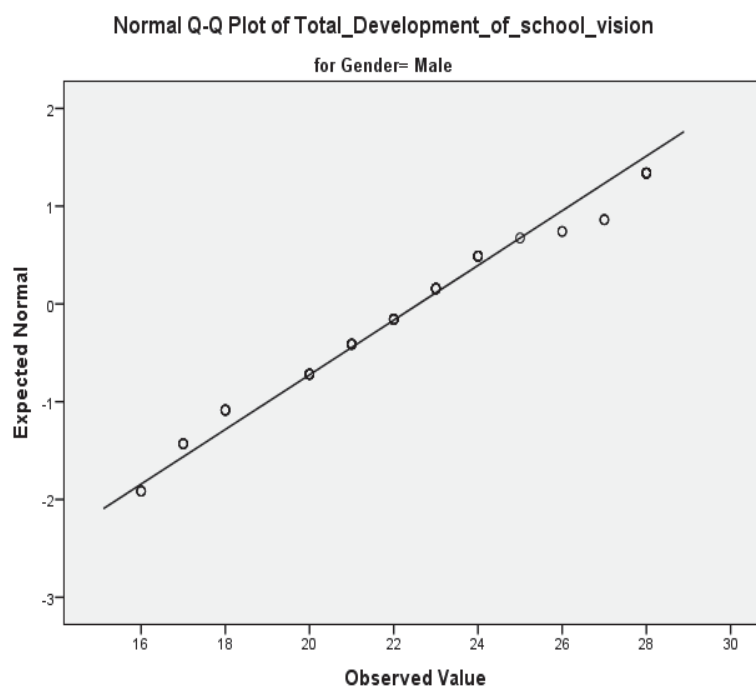
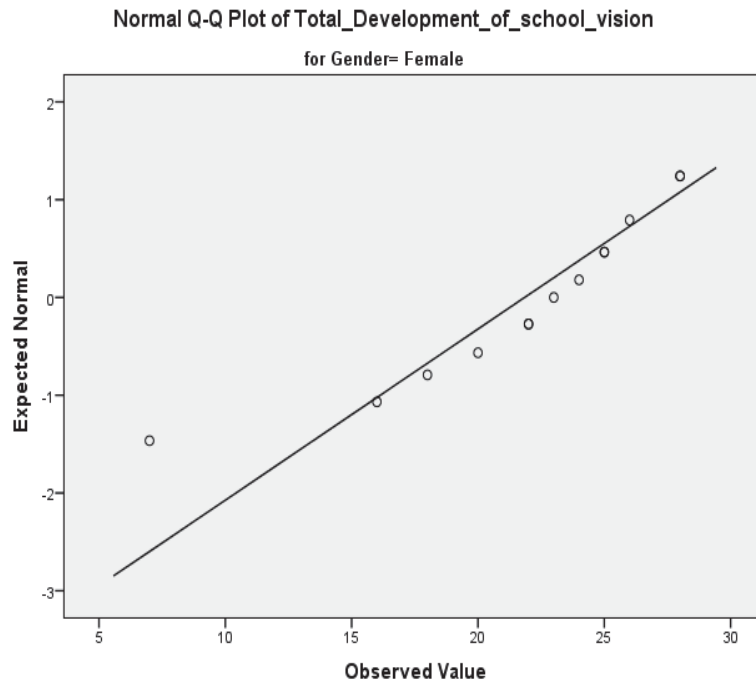
for Gender= Male



Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Communication\_in\_diverse\_environment

for Gender= Male

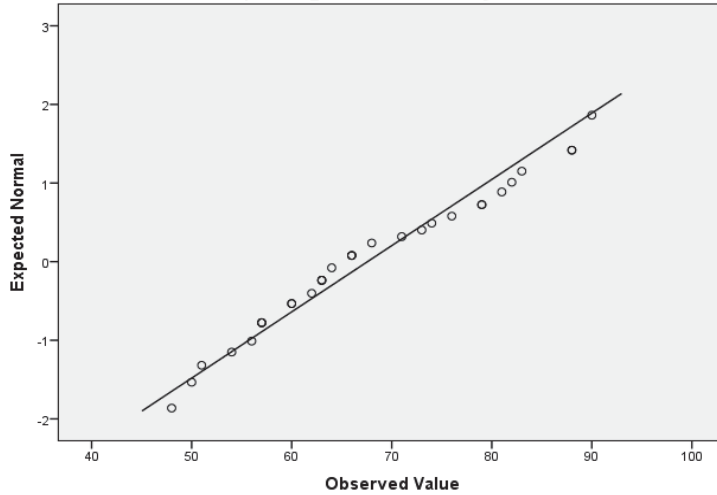




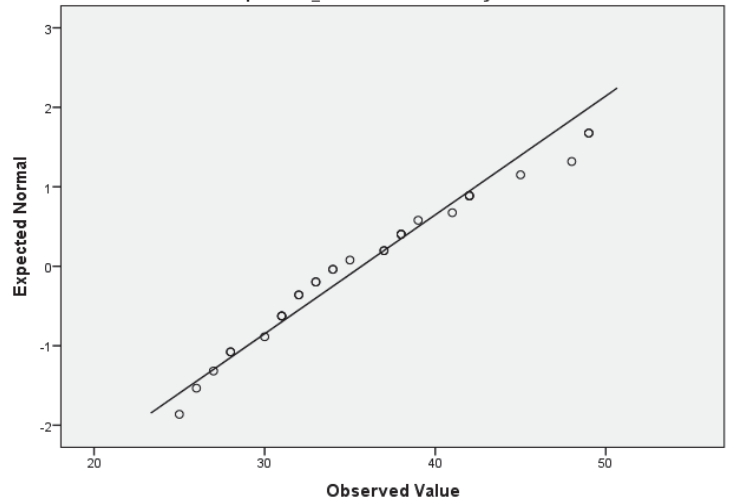
Normal Q-Q plots (see graphs above) were used to assess for normality of the dependent variables within each group of the independent variables. If data is normally distributed, the points in the plots above will follow the diagonal line. MANOVA is relatively robust against deviations from normality, and thus only approximate normal distributions are required. From the Q-Q plots above it can be seen that the data appears to be approximately normally distributed overall.

## Experience of principals

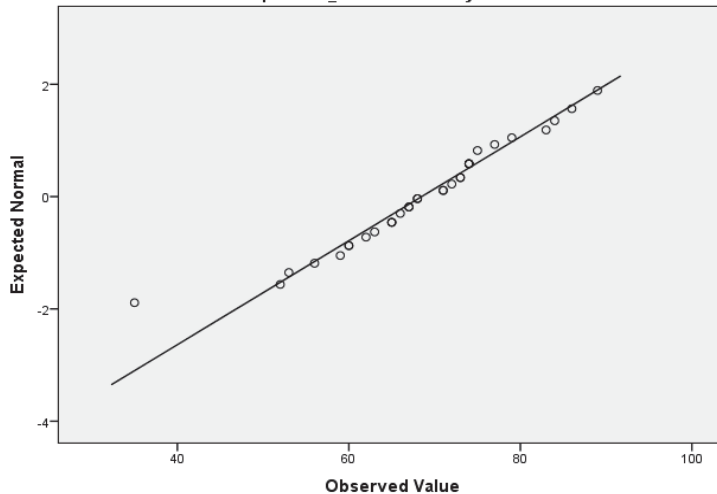
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Instructional\_leadership\_and\_staff\_development  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



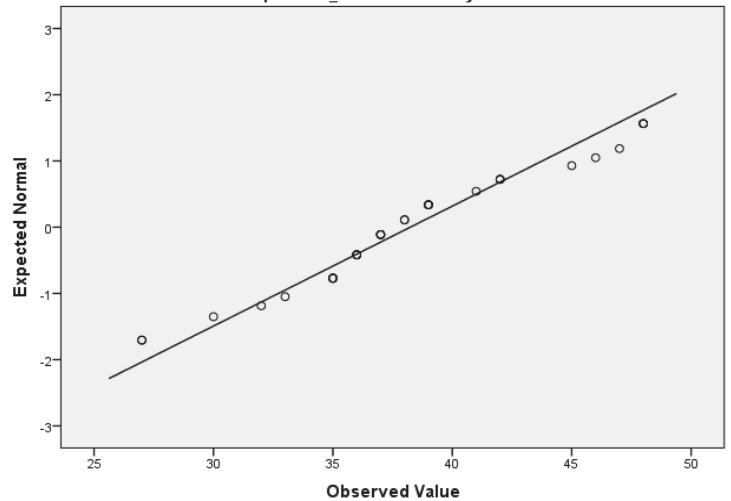
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_School\_climate\_and\_development  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



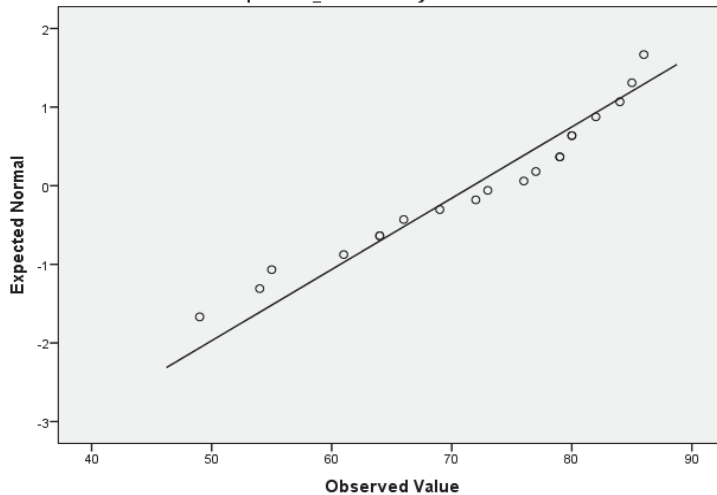
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Instructional\_leadership\_and\_staff\_development  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



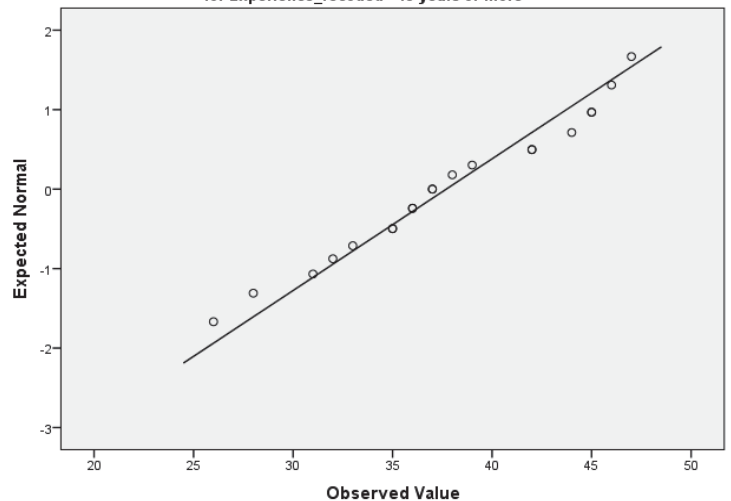
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_School\_climate\_and\_development  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



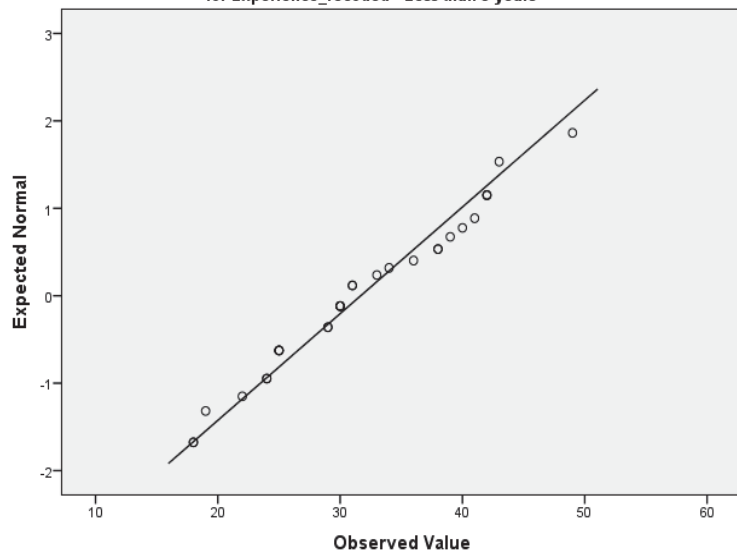
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Instructional\_leadership\_and\_staff\_development  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



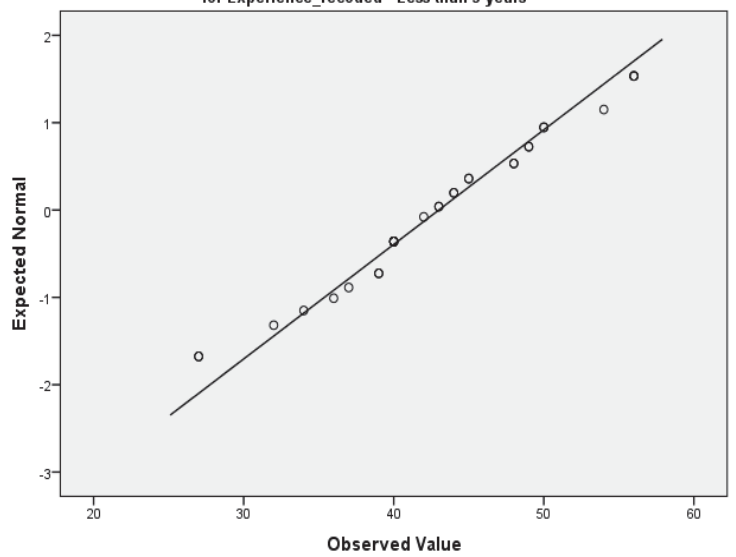
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_School\_climate\_and\_development  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



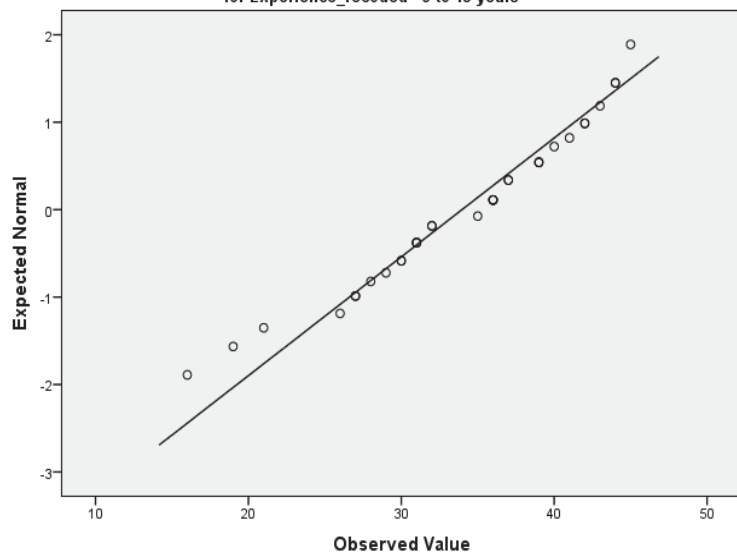
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Community\_Collaboration  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



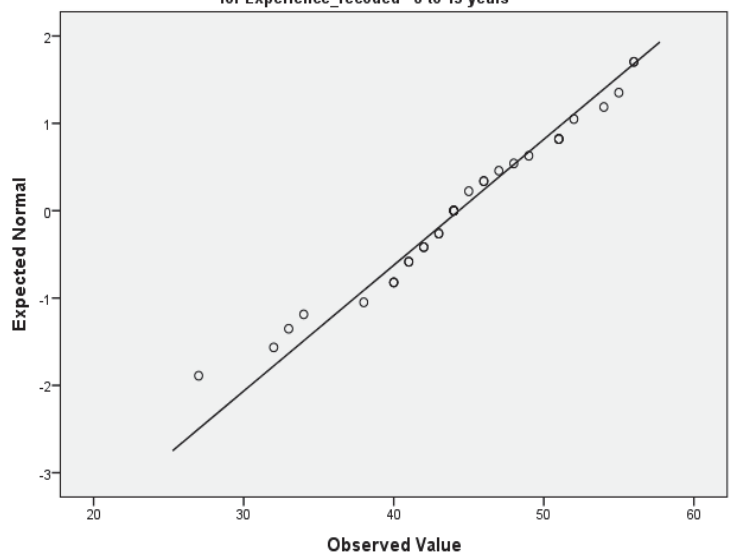
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Data\_based\_decision\_making  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



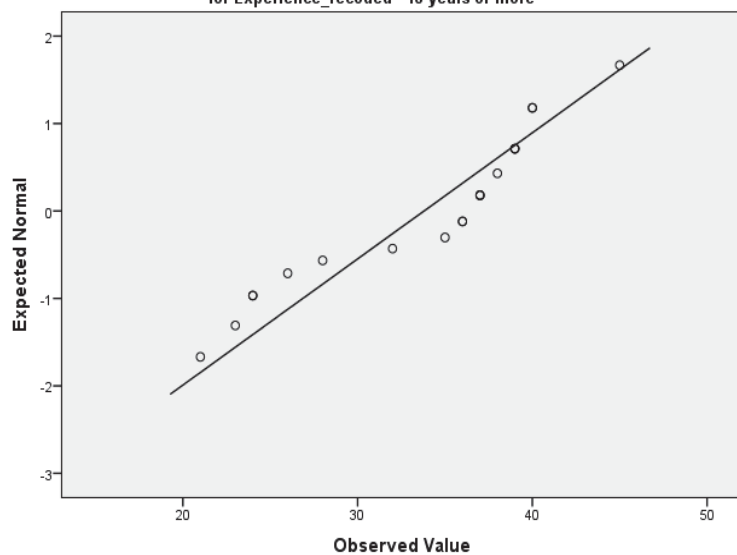
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Community\_Collaboration  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



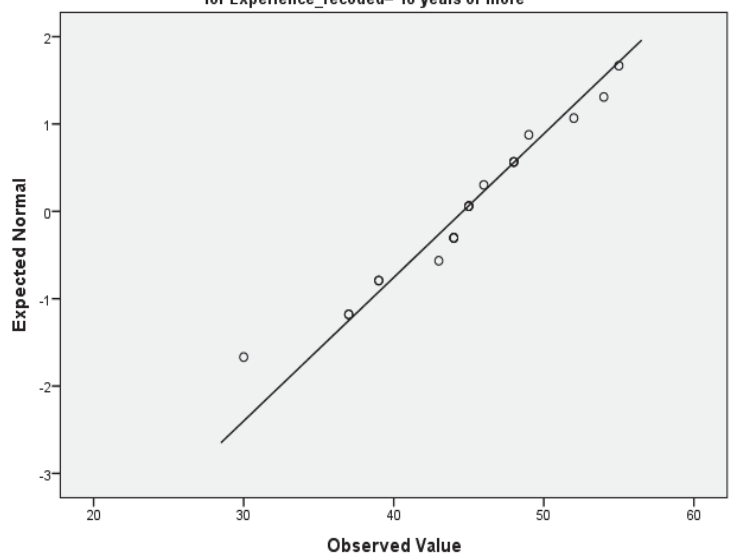
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Data\_based\_decision\_making  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



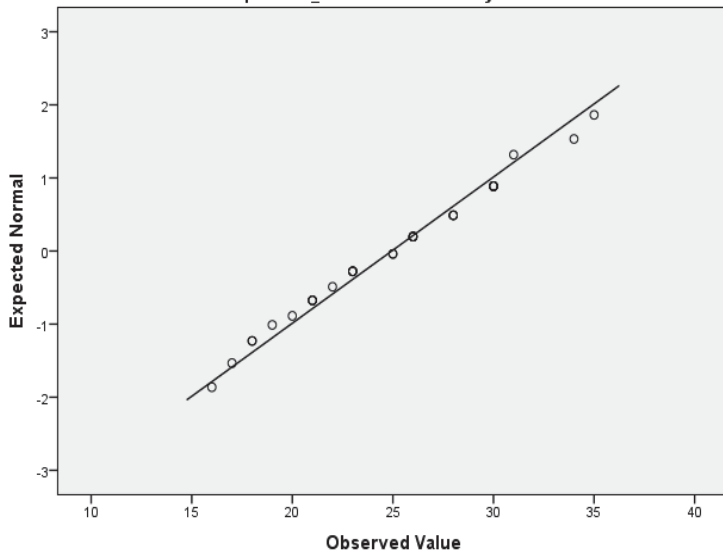
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Community\_Collaboration  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



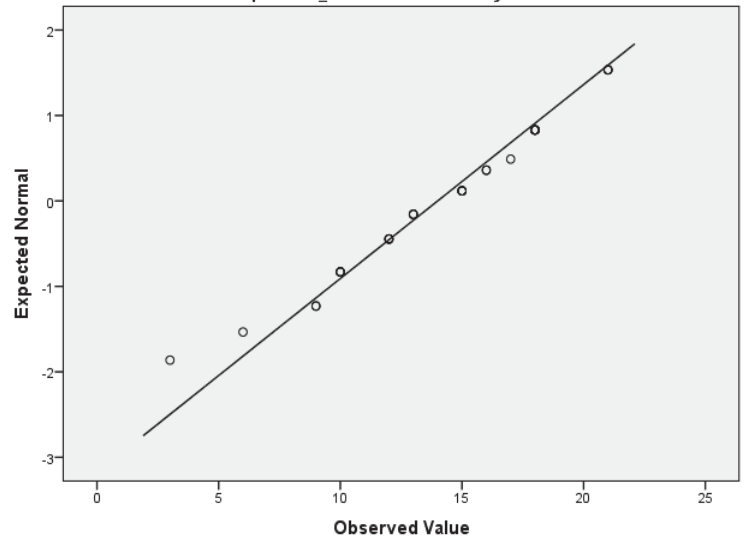
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Data\_based\_decision\_making  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



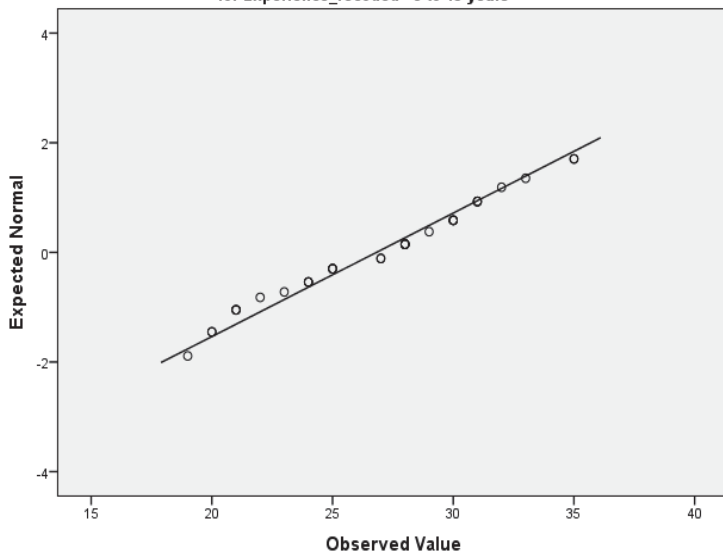
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Resource\_and\_facility\_management  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



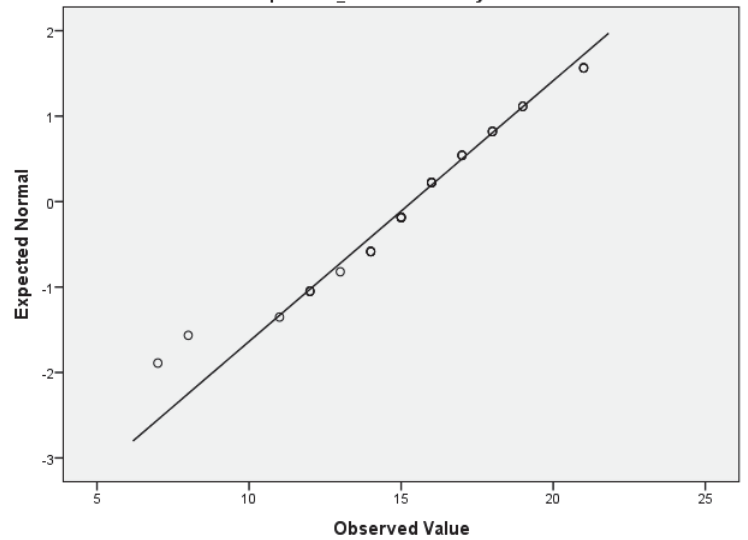
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Use\_of\_community\_resources  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



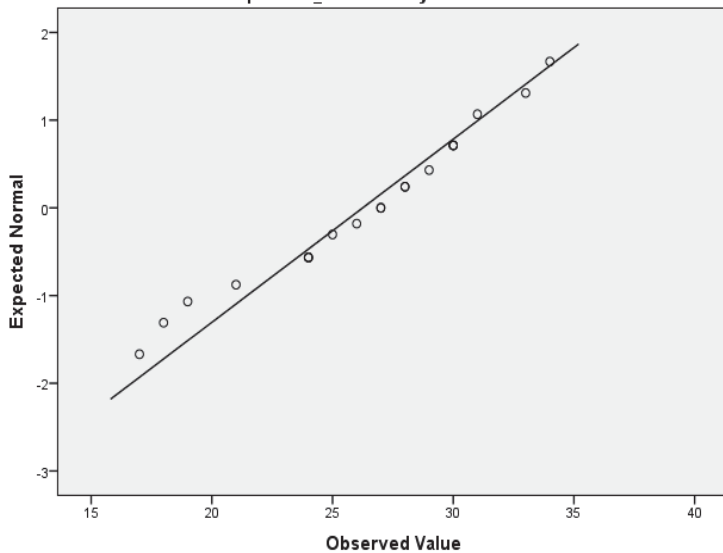
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Resource\_and\_facility\_management  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



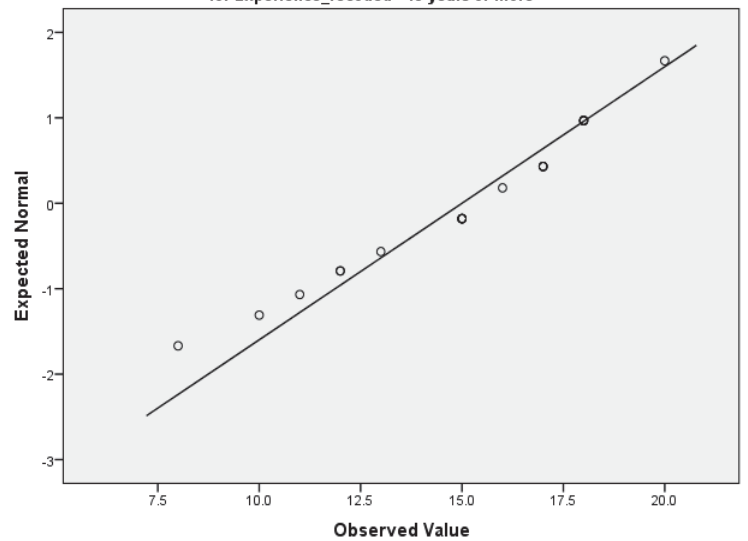
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Use\_of\_community\_resources  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



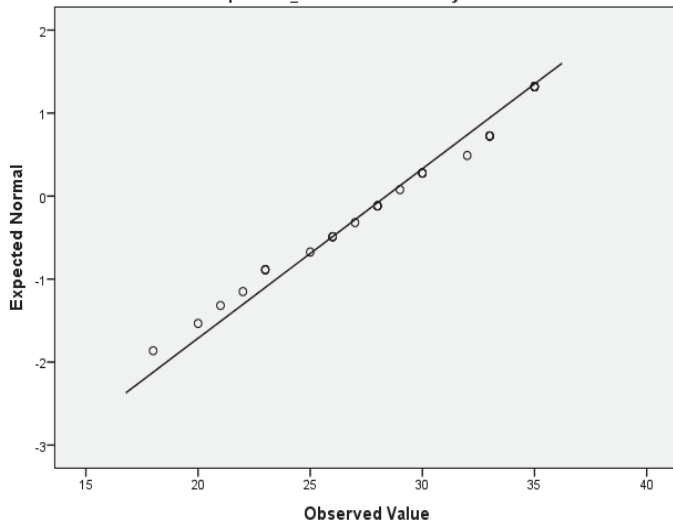
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Resource\_and\_facility\_management  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



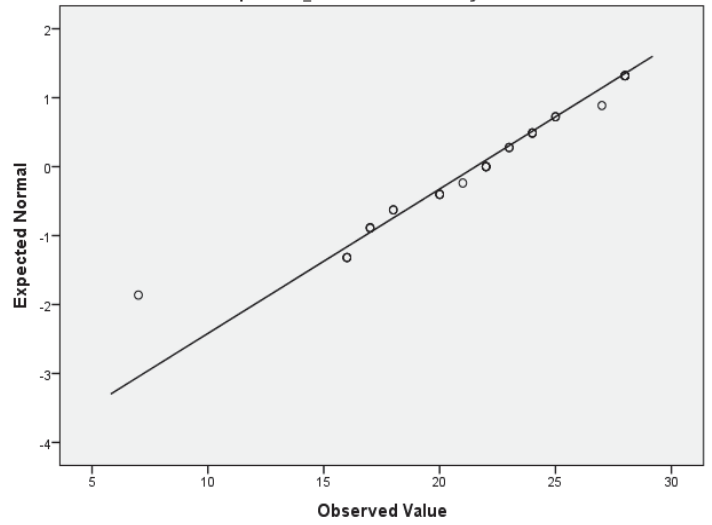
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Use\_of\_community\_resources  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



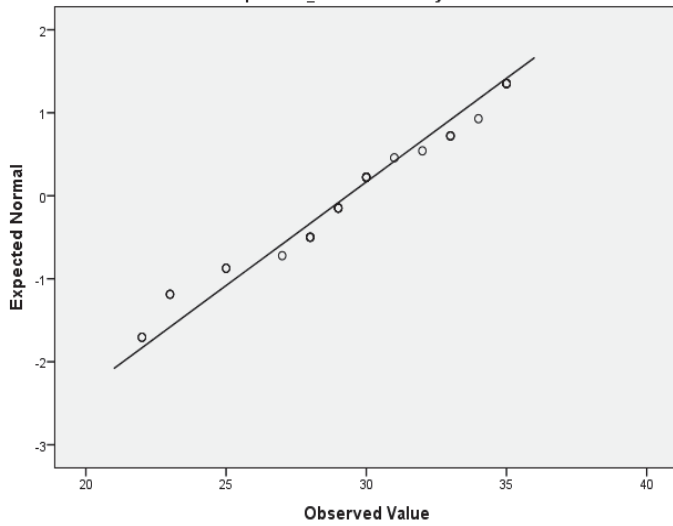
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Communication\_in\_diverse\_environment  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



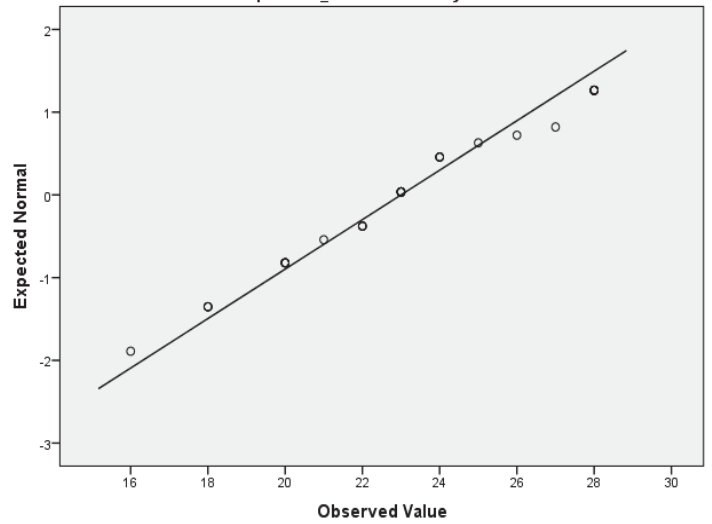
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Development\_of\_school\_vision  
for Experience\_recoded= Less than 5 years



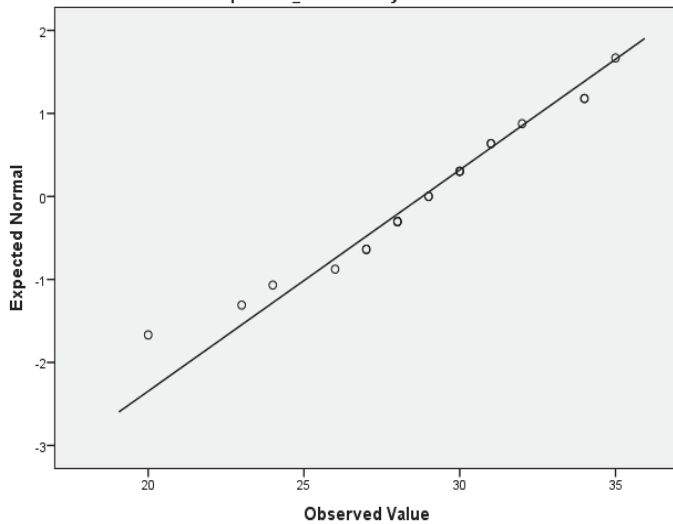
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Communication\_in\_diverse\_environment  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



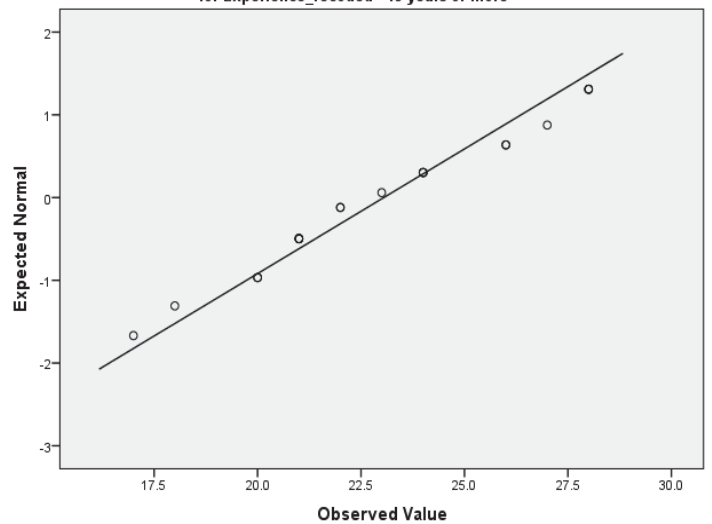
Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Development\_of\_school\_vision  
for Experience\_recoded= 6 to 15 years



Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Communication\_in\_diverse\_environment  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more



Normal Q-Q Plot of Total\_Development\_of\_school\_vision  
for Experience\_recoded= 16 years or more





Normal Q-Q plots (see graphs above) were used to assess for normality of the dependent variables within each group of the independent variables. If data is normally distributed, the points in the plots above will follow the diagonal line. MANOVA is relatively robust against deviations from normality, and thus only approximate normal distributions are required. From the Q-Q plots above it can be seen that the data appears to be approximately normally distributed overall.

### 5.11 Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices

**Table 5.39 - Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices<sup>a</sup>**

Box's M	258.800
F	1.202
df1	144
df2	4004.752
Sig.	.053

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

- a. Design: Intercept + Gender + Experience + Gender \* Experience

### 5.12 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

**Table 5.40 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup>**

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Total_Instructional_leadership_and_staff_development	1.147	8	75	.342
Total_School_climate_and_development	1.358	8	75	.229
Total_Community_Collaboration	1.713	8	75	.109
Total_Data_based_decision_making	1.364	8	75	.226
Total_Resource_and_facility_management	1.134	8	75	.351
Total_Use_of_community_resources	1.339	8	75	.238
Total_Communication_in_diverse_environment	1.768	8	75	.097
Total_Development_of_school_vision	1.713	8	75	.109

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

- a. Design: Intercept + Gender + Experience + Gender \* Experience

Both the Box's M multivariate test of homoscedasticity and Levene's univariate tests for equality of error variances show that heteroscedasticity is not present. Thus, we can assume that there is both univariate and multivariate homogeneity of variance across groups.

### 5.13 Results for Factorial MANOVA (Dependent variables: Leadership efficacy subscales, Independent variables: Gender and Experience as a manager)

Multivariate Tests – Table 5.41

Multivariate Tests <sup>a</sup>									
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>d</sup>
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.942	144.483 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.000	.942	1155.864	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.058	144.483 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.000	.942	1155.864	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	16.280	144.483 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.000	.942	1155.864	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	16.280	144.483 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.000	.942	1155.864	1.000
Gender	Pillai's Trace	.083	.800 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.604	.083	6.403	.343
	Wilks' Lambda	.917	.800 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.604	.083	6.403	.343
	Hotelling's Trace	.090	.800 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.604	.083	6.403	.343
	Roy's Largest Root	.090	.800 <sup>b</sup>	8.000	71.000	.604	.083	6.403	.343
Experience_recoded	Pillai's Trace	.156	.763	16.000	144.000	.724	.078	12.213	.501
	Wilks' Lambda	.849	.756 <sup>b</sup>	16.000	142.000	.733	.078	12.088	.496
	Hotelling's Trace	.171	.748	16.000	140.000	.741	.079	11.962	.490
	Roy's Largest Root	.112	1.005 <sup>c</sup>	8.000	72.000	.440	.100	8.042	.432
Gender * Experience_recoded	Pillai's Trace	.198	.989	16.000	144.000	.472	.099	15.823	.643
	Wilks' Lambda	.812	.976 <sup>b</sup>	16.000	142.000	.486	.099	15.621	.635
	Hotelling's Trace	.220	.964	16.000	140.000	.499	.099	15.420	.627
	Roy's Largest Root	.127	1.144 <sup>c</sup>	8.000	72.000	.345	.113	9.151	.491

a. Design: Intercept + Gender + Experience\_recoded + Gender \* Experience\_recoded

b. Exact statistic

c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.

d. Computed using alpha = .05

### ***Interaction effect***

As can be seen in the row highlighted in yellow in the table above there was no significant interaction effect between Gender and Experience on the combined dependent variable ( $F=0.976$ ,  $p=0.486$ ). This means that the effect of Experience on leadership efficacy did not differ between the males and females.

### ***Main effects***

As can be seen in the row highlighted in green in the table above that there was no significant main effect for Gender on the combined dependent variable ( $F=800$ ;  $p=0.604$ ). Thus, leadership efficacy did not differ between the males and females.

As can be seen in the row highlighted in blue in the table above, there was no significant main effect for Experience on the combined dependent variable ( $F=0.756$ ,  $p=0.733$ ). Thus, leadership efficacy did not differ between the principals with different years of experience.

## **5.14 Summary**

Chapter 5 focused on the quantitative data analysis. It presented the results on demographic frequencies, the responses of the principals on the leadership efficacy scale, subscales by variables, the results for the MANOVA, and the results for the Factorial MANOVA.

A factorial multivariate analysis of variance was run by the statisticians to determine the effect of the Gender and Experience of a principal on leadership efficacy. Eight measures of leadership efficacy were assessed: Total scores for Instructional Leadership and Staff Development; School Climate and Development; Community Collaboration; Data-Based Decision-Making Aligned with Legal and Ethical Principles; Resources and Facility Management; Use of Community Resources; Communication in a Diverse Environment; and Development of a School Vision. Preliminary assumption checking revealed that data was approximately normally distributed, as assessed by Normal Q-Q Plots; there were no extreme univariate outliers, as

assessed by boxplots; there were linear relationships, as assessed by scatterplots; there was no multicollinearity; and there was homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, as assessed by Box's M test ( $p = 0.53$ ). There was no significant interaction effect between Gender and Experience on the combined dependent variable ( $F=0.976$ ,  $p=0.486$ ). In addition, the difference between genders on the combined dependent variable was not statistically significant ( $F=800$ ;  $p=0.604$ ). The difference between different years of experience on the combined dependent variables was also not statistically significant ( $F=0.756$ ,  $p=0.733$ ). Thus, it appears that leadership efficacy did not differ between the principals of different genders, or the principals with different years of experience.

## CHAPTER 6

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

#### 6.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to assess the leadership efficacy of the school principals the secondary schools in the Free State Province in the different dimensions of their leadership roles, and to examine the factors, both personal and contextual, which affect their leadership efficacy. The research questions addressed by the study were:

1. What is the level of leadership efficacy of secondary school principals in different dimensions of their leadership roles in the Free State Province?
2. To what extent do personal and contextual factors affect the leadership efficacy of the school principals?
3. Are there differences in the leadership efficacy of the school principals in performing their tasks as differentiated by biographical factors such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school?
4. What other contextual variables affect the leadership practices of the school principals?
5. In what way is the overall climate of the school affected by the school principal's leadership efficacy?

This chapter addresses the Research Questions 3, 4 and 5. It presents the analysis and the interpretation of qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions that the school principals were asked in the questionnaire, as reflected in Appendix E, as well as data from the semi-structured interviews, as reflected in Appendix F. The first section of this chapter focuses on the aspects of management functions that the principals indicated were covered in their developmental workshops. This is followed by the discussion of the personal and contextual factors identified as having an effect on the leadership efficacy and leadership practices of the principals in this study.

## **6.2 Aspects of school management dealt with in the developmental workshops**

As reflected in Chapter 1, Section A of the questionnaire (number 1.3), the principals were asked if they had attended developmental workshops in school management. All the principals in the study indicated that they had attended workshops. The majority of the principals stated that the topics covered in the workshops included financial management, leadership and leadership styles, management of physical and human resources, education law, curriculum management, planning, motivation, ICT and general school management.

As far as financial management is concerned, 33 principals indicated that they had attended workshops on this topic. It would be ideal if all of them had attended, as research has shown that financial management is one of the problem areas in school management. As mentioned in Chapter 1, it is important for principals to study financial management as this knowledge is crucial to school management. Moloi (2007:468) states that financial management is one of the most important responsibilities facing principals since the implementation of the South African Schools Act in 1996. Moloi supports the findings of this study by arguing that a large number of principals consistently demonstrated their anxiety about carrying out this function and indicated a need for additional training in financial management. The principals, having been trained as educators, lack the necessary knowledge and skill to carry out the task of financial management. The Department of Education provides financial management courses to principals to equip them with these skills and help reduce the anxiety experienced by them when they perform financial management tasks. It is also important to note that the Free State Department of Education is making a concerted effort to arrange workshops to capacitate principals in various management and leadership roles, as indicated above.

Twenty-three principals attended workshops on leadership and leadership styles, 22 received training on managing physical and human resources, 13 attended workshops on education law, applicable policies and labour relations, 12 received training on curriculum management, while ten attended workshops and were trained on different management tasks. In the study conducted by Mathibe, he argued that principals in South African schools are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management

and leadership (Mathibe, 2007:523). He indicated that there was a lack of relevant leadership preparation programmes for school principals in South Africa. It is important to note that, according to Mathibe, some principals are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership. As a result, they experience culture shock as they cross the threshold from teaching into principal-ship.

Looking at the numbers of principals who attended the different workshops against the sample of the study, the researcher agrees with Mathibe that principals in South Africa are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management. The literature shows that the reason for exposing principals to all these workshops is because they are not adequately trained for the demands of their posts.

The next section presents and discusses personal factors which were identified as having an effect on the principals' leadership practices.

### **6.3 Personal factors affecting school principals and their leadership practices**

As indicated earlier on, the study sought some answers to a number of research questions. The question in this particular case was:

- To what extent do personal and contextual factors affect the leadership efficacy of the school principals?

The first part of Research Question 3 is addressed here. The principals were requested to identify personal factors which affected their leadership practices and explain the effect of these factors on their leadership practices. A number of personal factors were identified; these included age, being too accommodative, over-confidence, impatience, indecisiveness, inability to delegate, and difficulty in balancing work and family life. The first personal factor which will be discussed is age.

#### **Age**

The age of the principal was cited as one of the problems affecting one's leadership efficacy, and consequently, leadership behaviour or practice. If principals were

younger than some of the staff members, it was a challenge to get older teachers to do their job. This finding is supported by Atieno and Simatwa (2012:391) when they state that a challenge experienced by young principals in this regard includes insubordination and uncooperative teachers.

The following excerpts from school principals illustrate the problems when dealing with staff members who are older than the school principal:

*“Elderly educators who resist to meet due dates. As a result deadlines are not met because of the late submissions.”*

*“My age against the age of the elders at school. They abuse their age when coming to professional issues.”*

The following factor identified by school principals is their inability to find a balance between being people-oriented and task-oriented.

### ***Problems in finding a balance between the task and people management***

In this study, the principals indicated that they sometimes cared more for people than getting the job done. This meant that they were not able to find a balance between the task and people management. Some of the principals indicated that they were too soft with both teachers and learners. As a result they were taken advantage of by educators and learners.

Kearns (2011:23), indicates the importance of maintaining the balance between managing people and managing the task. He states that principals need to balance a concern for people and relationships with a concern for the task; that is, getting things done and getting what you want. This means the principals should first carefully consider the issues and concerns that the situation presents. Second, the school leader develops clear, viable goals. Third, the skilled leader initiates action that supports achieving the established goals. These three steps are important in ensuring that principals find a balance between task and people management.



On being more people-oriented than task-oriented, this is what some of the school principals said:

*“Sometimes I am more people-oriented than task-oriented. I think I need to strike the balance between the two.”*

*“The element of Ubuntu in me is a challenge. Thinking that the educators will see the need to do their work.”*

The principals indicated that sometimes they emphasise the human factor, and this had a negative effect on their leadership practices as teachers at times did not do their work. In order to avoid this, the researcher is of the opinion that the school principals should maintain a balance between being people-oriented and task-oriented.

One of the personal factors which affected the principals' leadership practices was being too democratic or too accommodative with the staff.

### ***Being too democratic or being too accommodative***

The school principals stated that they could be too democratic at times. The literature in Chapter 2 states that the democratic leadership style is a very open and collegial style of running a team. Ideas move freely amongst the group and are discussed openly. Everyone is given a seat at the table, and discussion is relatively free-flowing. Democratic leadership, also known as the participative leadership style, is a type of leadership style in which the members of the group take a more participative role in the decision-making process. Researchers have found that this leadership style is usually one of the most effective, and leads to higher productivity, better contributions from group members, and increased group morale (Ray & Ray, 2012:3). Other principals indicated that because they were too democratic, some members of the school community take advantage of the situation and do not do their work.

On this factor some of the principals commented as follows:

*“Being too democratic in accommodating everyone. As a result, I find myself undermined and work not carried out to the best.”*

*“I am too much lenient at times. This gives an impression that I accommodate everything not knowing that I can become strict when needs be.”*

The following personal factor is being over-confident. Being over-confident can be a problem. This factor can lead to the failure of the school principal in the performance of their duties as school principals.

### **Over-confidence**

Self-confidence is a positive trait. Over-confidence though can create problems for the school principal. Fast, Sivanathan, Mayer & Galinsky (2012) define over-confidence as an inflated sense of confidence in the accuracy of one's knowledge. When leaders are plagued by over-confidence, the consequences for performance can be detrimental. The concept over-confidence is situated in a large body of evidence in Cognitive Psychology demonstrating the widespread prevalence of positive illusions and self-enhancement biases. This literature demonstrates that some people tend to view themselves more positively than is objectively warranted.

According to Moore and Cain (2007:3), research conducted in Psychology and Business Studies indicate that over-confidence is an explanation for the persistent high rates of entrepreneurial entry, despite the frequency of entrepreneurial failure. Malmendier and Tate (in Moore & Cain, 2007) used over-confidence to explain the high rate of corporate mergers and acquisitions despite the fact that they often fail. Principals in this study indicated that over-confidence could be a problem as it could have a negative effect on how they lead.

One of the school principals said the following about over-confidence:

*“Sometimes I become too confident that I may make decisions without consulting stakeholders.”*

Another school principals said the following:

*“The over-confidence sometimes leads to conflict, but I always try to avoid making such mistakes.”*

Both the literature and the findings of this study show the dangers of over-confidence in principals.

Another personal factor, which had a negative effect on the leadership practices of school principals, was impatience.

### ***Impatience***

The principals identified impatience as one of the personality traits that could have a negative effect on their leadership practices. Patience according to the researcher is very important in managing teachers, learners, and other members of the school community. Spear (2009:28), agrees with these findings because he states that impatient leaders keep their followers on their toes and edgy with anxiety. It is difficult to contend with an impatient leader.

On impatience, one of the school principals commented:

*“I get irritated if people take long to understand what I want them to do.”*

Patience in the opinion of the researcher is very important. School principals need to work on their tendency to be impatient as it contributes to a negative school climate.

Indecisiveness is a personal factor which is identified as having a negative effect on the leadership practices of principal.

## **Indecisiveness**

Some of the principals in this study stated that they could be indecisive at times. Research conducted by Olcum and Titrek (2015:197) focused on determining the relationship between principals' decision making and the teachers' job satisfaction. The findings of this study showed that the ways principals make decisions have an important effect on teachers' job satisfaction. School principals who avoid or postpone making decisions decrease teachers' job satisfaction levels. This finding talks to the findings in this study and emphasises the importance of principals' ability to make decisions and to make the right decisions. The school principals who make the right decisions will foster a positive school climate because their ability to take a stand and make decisions increases the teachers' job satisfaction levels.

On being indecisive, this is what one of the principals had to say:

*“Sometimes I take a long time to decide on a matter - I need to be decisive once I have made up my mind on the matter.”*

Decisiveness is important for principals as they are faced with situations in which they must make decisions. So, according to the view of the researcher, principals must be in a position to make the right decisions at the right time.

Not delegating work to subordinates was identified by the principals as a factor that negatively affects their leadership.

## **Not delegating work to subordinates**

The principals in this study indicated that they did not delegate task to subordinates. Some of them argued that they do not delegate some of the duties to teachers because they believed that if they did things on their own they get things done faster. Principals can however not do everything, they need to delegate some of their tasks to the members of the School Management Team (SMT) and to other teachers. In Chapter 2, not delegating work to subordinates is seen as one of the personal factors that negatively affects the leadership of principals. Beeka (2008:39) supports the finding

of the study on the issue of not delegating. He states that principals who do not delegate duties to other members of the school community are insecure. He further says that principals' insecurity to delegate responsibility is due to the lack of ability to delegate responsibilities to the rest of the staff members as followers. The insecure principal can hardly be expected to delegate responsibilities.

In my view, as the researcher, a principal cannot do everything. It is important that they delegate some of their work to the School Management Team (SMT) and other staff members.

The following are some of the comments by the principals:

*"I do not delegate enough. Not delegating leads to projects not being completed in time, missing targets and this can have a negative impact on the school."*

Difficulties in balancing work and family life was also identified as one of the personal factors having a negative effect on principals.

### ***Difficulties in balancing work and family life***

Some of the school principals in this study indicated that their workload made it difficult to balance their work as a principal and their family life. Their workload was heavy so they ended up spending long hours at work. In some instances, even weekends were spent at work. This finding is emphasised by Preetika and Priti (2013:40). They indicate that in their study on the challenges experienced by principals, maintaining a balance between personal needs and professional responsibilities was problematic for many principals. The principals said that in the initial years of their career, it was difficult to manage work, especially with young children.

On the difficulties in balancing work and family life some of the principals commented:

*"To be principal these days takes too much of your time, and sometimes you neglect your families, which has a negative impact on your family life."*

*“Working far from family means spending less time with family due to work and this leads to estranged relationships with family members.”*

*“The frustration of your family can have a negative impact on your ability to lead others because they think if you cannot lead your family, what about other people (you cannot lead other people).”*

The personal factors were found to have a negative influence on the principals' leadership practices. It is important in the researcher's opinion that school principals find ways of dealing with personal problems or personal factors which might negatively impact their leadership.

The next section examines the contextual factors, that is, in-school factors that affect the leadership practices of principals negatively.

#### **6.4 Contextual factors affecting school principals' leadership practices negatively**

This section attempts to address the second part of Research Question 3. The principals identified lack of support by the Department of Education, government interference, union interference, ineffective school governing bodies, lack of resources, the socio-economic background of learners, lack of discipline, lack of parent involvement, uncooperative teachers and unsafe environments as contextual factors which affect their leadership practices negatively.

The contextual factors will be discussed.

##### ***Lack of support by the Department of Education***

The principals said that there was lack of support from the Department of Education at times. This finding is supported by the research conducted by Dea and Basha (2014:65) as their findings indicate that lack of support by the Department was seen as a challenge school principals encounter in implementing quality education.

The following are verbatim statements made by some of the school principals:

*“Lack of support from the Department of Education.”*

*“If the principal makes decisions and the Department of Education changes the decisions, the staff end up being confused on what to do and what not to do.”*

The Departmental officials in the opinion of the researcher have to find ways of supporting school principals' but should also be careful not to interfere with how the school operates. This could be done if the school principal is running the school the way schools should be managed.

### ***Government interference***

Some of the principals in this study indicated that there was interference by Departmental officials, using a top-down approach, and this made it difficult for them to make decisions as these decisions were likely to be changed. Thus, it was difficult for the principals to plan in advance because the plans might change; this had a negative impact on their leadership. Some of the principals stated that the government influenced and interfered with their work. This interference by the government made it difficult for the principals to do their work effectively. It seems like this problem is not unique to South Africa. Research conducted by Yisrael in the United Kingdom (2012: 2) shows interference also takes place in United Kingdom; he states that, school principals have been stripped of most of their power and authority. He further indicates that this has in many ways tied the hands of principals and placed limitations on what they can do. These restrictions have major implications, adversely affecting basic administrative functions such as hiring staff, making budget allocations, enforcing discipline codes and school policies, disciplining ineffective staff, and implementing needed school-wide reforms.

Some of the principals highlighted the following points on government interference:

*“Political factors determined by National and Provincial government interfere with how the school operates.”*

*“The interference of government has a negative impact on completion of jobs at hand and implementation of decisions.”*

*“The district seeking to be hands-on, on every matter.”*

*“Law or rules passed down from above, but are not school-friendly.”*

### **Union interference**

The principals who participated in the study stated that labour unions interfere with how they performed their duties. Unions interfering with the principals in performing their duties was a problem. Thus, they could not perform some of their tasks effectively. The finding is supported by a study conducted in the Eastern Cape by Msila (2014). He argues that school principals highlighted the challenges of leading in schools that have a strong union influence. For the principals in the study, working with intense teacher union influence poses a number of challenges. Ntshangase (2001:84) shares the same sentiments as Msila when he states that there are principals who feel threatened by the presence of teacher union members in their schools and they want to be protected from the actions of militant union members. This, according to Ntshangase, is the result of the fact that some of the principals were harassed and victimized by the labour unions. Principals perceive teacher unions as political interest groups that are interfering with their duties. It is important to note that principals are entrusted with the responsibility to manage schools and cannot effectively do so because of union interference. In performing their management duties they are also expected to be creative and innovative in making decisions. The union members make it difficult for principals to make decisions as they are restricted to policy documents whenever they are expected to make decisions.

The following are some of the comments given by school principals:

*“Union or SADTU interferes with class visits. This limits my assistance to teachers in terms of teaching and learning practices in class environment.”*



*“Union members think they work for the Union, and not for the Department of Education.”*

The researcher is of the view that it is important for the union leaders to know when to intervene in school issues.

### ***School Governing Body***

The principals experienced problems with School Governing Bodies (SGBs) that were inefficient. The principals indicated that SGBs that did not perform their duties had a negative effect on the performance of their duties. The SGB body should support the principal with the governance of the school. Ramfol (2011:172), supports this finding as he states that School Governing Bodies lack a sense of their roles and responsibilities.

Early (2013:8) in his study stated that the quality of the School Governing Body is an important influence on school improvement. However, an ineffective governing body does appear to have a negative impact on outcomes.

The school principals had this to say about SGBs:

*“SGB relying on me instead of assisting.”*

*“SGB that is not committed.”*

The findings in Van Wyk’s study (2004:51) on the effectiveness of SGBs concurs with the response of one of the principals in this study that the SGB relies on the principals, instead of assisting them. Van Wyk’s study focused on the experiences of educators about their perceptions on the effectiveness of SGBs. The findings in her study show that educators questioned the effectiveness of SGBs. Some of the educators in the study indicated that SGBs are not effective in fulfilling their tasks. As a result, the SGB members lacked confidence and were uncertain about their duties. Thus, they depended on the principal to make decisions.

The researcher is of the opinion that SGBs are responsible for governing schools, thus they must be active in their role as governors. This can only be achieved if SGB members know what is expected of them and are capable of performing duties of SGBs.

### ***Lack of resources***

Some of the school principals mentioned a lack of resources as a challenge for school principals. In the view of the researcher, schools need resources to function effectively. The researcher further indicates that resources are needed for academic, sports and cultural activities. Sindhva (2009:22) supports the finding as he states that, leading in a school with no resources was a challenge for some of the principals. A lack of resources made it difficult for the principals to reach their objectives. The principals could not carry out school activities as planned, and goals could not be achieved due to this. Achieving goals in schools requires resources in the form of personnel, equipment, funding and time. Lack of resources can be a serious setback on a leader's path to accomplishing goals in education. The leader's self-efficacy for successfully leading a school may be diminished if resources are viewed as inadequate for supporting his or her efforts. This view of the principals is supported by research done in Nigeria by Abdurashied and Bello (2015:4) on the challenges experienced by principals. They also indicated that poor funding of schools is a major problem for principals as it leads to leadership ineffectiveness.

The school principals' commented:

*"If there is no money everything stops, learners cannot progress well."*

*"Without money, development of the school is a challenge."*

These excerpts from the school principals, according to the researcher, emphasize the fact that schools struggle to function without the necessary resources. This means that the Department of Education (DoE) should support schools by making resources available.

## ***Socio-economic background of learners***

Some of the school principals also identified socio-economic background as one of the contextual factors which influence their leadership practices. They indicated that they are principals in poor communities. Poverty affects schools negatively because the schools have the added challenge of raising funds. Apart from poverty, there is a number of other factors associated with the socio-economic background of the learners; factors such as illiterate parents, child-headed households, and unemployment. Bush *et al.* (2011:39), in their study on preparing new principals, indicated that most of the schools in their study serve deprived township and rural communities with high levels of poverty, unemployment, child-headed families, and drug and alcohol abuse. This provides an unpromising context for learner achievement. While effective school management is important, principals cannot compensate for such socio-economic challenges. Research conducted by Notman *et al.* (2009) on challenges experienced by principals also highlighted that poverty was a challenge for some families. Other challenges within the community include households with low educational qualifications, houses with a large number of people, and households with many health issues. All these factors have an impact on the learners' performance at school (Notman *et al.*, 2009:2). This in turn has an effect on the leadership of the school.

This is what some of the school principals had to say concerning the influence of the socio-economic background of learners in their schools:

*“One cannot effectively achieve much from a hungry child, or a child who is answerable to him or herself, neither from a person who is abused because of circumstances beyond their control.”*

*“We have to dig deep in order to ascertain the self-belief of our learners. Learners sometimes feel helpless in such situations and we have to be with them every step of their schooling.”*

Schools in the view of the researcher continue to struggle with children coming from poor socio-economic backgrounds. This challenge needs different stakeholders in the

society to come together and find ways of helping school principals in dealing with children coming from different socio-economic backgrounds.

### ***Lack of discipline***

In the findings of this study the principals indicated that they experienced disciplinary problems with both teachers and learners. It is difficult to manage a school where there is a lack of discipline. Lack of discipline impacts negatively on performance and curriculum delivery.

The review of literature in Chapter 2, supports this finding. Chukwuka (2013) argues that, lack of discipline was indicated as a major problem affecting the effectiveness of work in the public and private sectors and in the school system, in particular. He goes further and says that where indiscipline reigns, discipline is lacking. Indiscipline at school includes disobedience, lack of respect for constituted authorities, violation of school rules and regulations, and other types of disorderly behavior. Osher *et al.* (2010:48) state that schools face a number of challenges related to disruptive and antisocial students. The behaviour of these students interfere with learning, diverts administrative time, and contributes to teacher burnout.

On the lack of discipline, some of the principals said the following:

*“Discipline takes up your time. You don’t spend enough time with the kids that conduct themselves.”*

*“School principals spend most of the time talking about discipline instead of addressing important things.”*

*“Discipline that needs to be addressed by the Department takes long to be implemented thus affecting the discipline amongst educators.”*

### ***Lack of parent involvement***

The principals in this study stated that the lack of parent involvement was another contextual factor affecting their leadership practices. The parents did not cooperate with the school and there was poor participation of parents in the education of their children. When parents did not support the school, the goals of the school could not be realised because principals were unable to put in practice their plans.

Preetika and Priti (2013:40) agree with the principals' views that a lack of parent involvement is a problem for principals as they need the support of parents. In their study, they drew a distinction between private and government schools. Their findings indicated that in government schools there was no support from the parents. In some cases there was lack of concern from parents for their children. They further state that some principals felt that the school had to take care of teaching a child the difference between right and wrong and helping a child develop a sense of right and wrong, which in actual fact was the parent's responsibility. Some parents did not even check if their children were attending school. They also stated that learner absenteeism and lack of support from parents were found to be more prominent in government and state-aided schools, than in private schools.

This is what some of the principals said:

*“Support on the part of the parents is inadequate. Parents do not attend scheduled meetings.”*

*“Parent who do not take the education of the children seriously. These are parents who do not cooperate with the school.”*

### ***Uncooperative teachers***

The principals in this study indicated that uncooperative teachers influenced their leadership practices negatively. Teachers are stakeholders in education and principals need dedicated teachers who perform their duties to the best of their ability. This is not always the case, as principals encountered problems of teachers who did

not show cooperation in education activities. This posed a challenge to principals because they need dedicated staff members to ensure that schools achieved their goals.

This finding is emphasised by Preetika and Pritti (2013:40). They states that one of the major challenges experienced by school principals was to get work done by staff. They further argued that, this was especially difficult in government schools as a secure job made teachers indifferent. Dea and Basha (2014:65), also indicated that the lack of commitment by teachers manifested in the failure to solve problems. Teachers pushed every problem upward and sought readymade solutions from principals. One of the principals who participated in the study by Dea and Basha indicated that 90% of people came to work for a salary, and not to work. The principals further said that teachers only worked at the end of the year when their Annual Confidential Reports were being prepared and they were worried about a poor evaluation.

Some of the principals commented:

*“Lack of responsibility from subordinates, people in leadership roles who do not step up to expectations. These problems at times open opportunities for power struggles.”*

*“Personnel that is not always available to carry out (implement) decisions collectively agreed upon.”*

*“Staff which is not a team – it is difficult to achieve goals (shared goals).”*

The researcher is of the opinion that teachers should understand the importance of working together for the good of the school. This will push them to perform their duties diligently.

## ***Unsafe school environments***

The principals in this study observed that one of the contextual factors affecting their leadership efficacy was the fact that their schools were not safe teaching and learning environments because of gangs in and outside the school. This is supported by the literature in Chapter 2. Lacoë (2012:3) states that a safe environment is a prerequisite for productive learning. If learners feel unsafe in the classroom, it is likely that they are less able to concentrate in class and perform well in assessment. Duke *et al.*, 2015:43, in their study indicate that living in impoverished neighbourhoods and communities can expose young people to heightened levels of gang activity and substance abuse. These problems frequently spill over into schoolyards, classrooms and corridors, presenting educators with enormous challenges. This affects teaching and learning negatively.

The following is what one of the school principals had to say:

*“Issues of gangsterism are brought into the school and sometimes affect tuition.”*

The principals in this study identified a number of contextual or in-school factors which had a negative effect on their leadership practices. This in turn could lead to negative leadership efficacy, which could lead to a negative school climate. In the researcher’s view, effective teaching and learning will only take place in a positive teaching and learning environment. Next section we focus on the contribution of principals in creating a positive school climate.

### **6.5 School principals’ contribution to the school climate**

The contribution of the principals to the school climate was a response to a question in Section C of the questionnaire (see Appendix E). The question posed to the principals was the following:

- *In what way do you see yourself as contributing towards a positive school climate and a healthy school?*

The principals indicated a number of ways in which they contributed to a positive school climate. The following are some of the ways in which they see themselves as contributing towards a positive school climate:

- Developing a vision and mission
- Code of conduct
- Being hands-on
- Motivating others
- Being fair to others
- Being positive
- Being pro-active
- Showing a democratic leadership style
- Developing staff
- Showing commitment
- Leading by example
- Positive interpersonal relations

The listed ways will now be discussed.

### ***Developing a vision and mission***

Some of the principals stated that developing a school's vision and mission led to a positive school climate. The reason this led to a positive school climate could be that the teachers were familiar with the vision and the mission, so they knew what the expectations of the school were, as these were communicated by the principal.

Literature concurs with the responses of the principals. Belle (2007:74) states that a principal should be a visionary leader whose role, responsibility and accountability as an instructional leader requires clarity and focus. A vision is a mental image of the future; therefore it is an expression of what the school desires and its strategic intent. Barnett and McCormick (in Belle, 2007) state that a vision is a core leadership task that must be mastered by all principals since it encourages high levels of commitment



and motivation by teachers to solve school problems. It should not be prescribed by the principal but should be a joint venture by all stakeholders involved in the school.

The following excerpt from one of the principals shows such commitment to developing a vision and mission.

*“Planning and vision are my major contributing factors.”*

### **Code of conduct**

Some school principals indicated that they used the code of conduct of their schools to create a positive school climate. This observation supports the assertion by Mestry and Khumalo (2012:98) that a code of conduct is used to manage the behaviour of the learners. They state that the code of conduct spells out rules regarding learner behaviour and describes the disciplinary processes to be implemented concerning transgressions by learners. They further support the argument that the school's code of conduct creates a positive school climate, because the code of conduct promotes values such as human dignity, equality and freedom.

In support of the above findings Van Wyk & Pelser (2014:834), argue that school policies and rules are mainly used to regulate all aspects of behaviour. They are not supposed to prohibit misbehaviour but rather to provide for a prohibition of certain negative occurrences. These policies are not merely intended to promote order but to assist learners to become followers and to encourage positive behaviour.

The researcher is of the opinion that positive behaviour by learners is achieved because of a code of conduct. In that way, having a code of conduct in a school contributes to a positive school climate.

In support of this argument one principal commented:

*“Everybody, that is, educators, parents and learners now understand that the school as an organization is ruled and controlled by laws and if you want to enjoy your work*

*make sure that you fit in those laws and regulations. In so doing, you will have positive attitude and you will enjoy coming to work.”*

### ***Being hands-on***

Principals believe that by being hands-on in school activities cultivate a positive attitude as they have insight into the challenges and frustrations that teachers face on a daily basis. Being in class helps as they find ways of resolving these challenges in their schools, which leads to a positive school climate. The literature in Chapter 3 shows that in a study conducted by Moonsammy-Koopsammy (2012:83), principals indicated that they would be in a better position to support and communicate good teaching if they are engaged or hands-on in teaching the learners themselves. One of the principals in the study by Moonsammy-Koopsammy stated that the benefit of teaching was linked to gaining insight into what went on in the classrooms and also into the frustrations teachers experienced with regard to planning and assessment.

Some principals commented by being hands-on as follows:

*“Being on the ground and hands-on. Though I delegate, I like being part of the team.”*

*“Be there, be part of the change, be part of planning.”*

*“I am always on the forefront on everything the school does.”*

### ***Motivation***

The principals in this study also identified motivation as a way of creating a positive school climate. Belle (2007:7,162), supports this finding when he states that a principal has to play a significant role in motivating his or her teachers in order to facilitate the effective functioning of the school as an organisation. The teacher needs the full support of the principal to be motivated. The findings in Belle’s study on motivation were that the following behaviour by principals led to motivation of teachers: recognition of achievement and accomplishment in terms of feedback and praise from the principal and the management, and the leadership approach of the principal in

terms of fairness, control and monitoring instructions, that is, a leadership style that allowed teacher autonomy and shared decision-making.

One of the principals commented as follows:

*“Being exemplary, motivating others and being consistent.”*

### ***Being fair***

Some principals were of the opinion that by treating everyone fairly, they were contributing to the creation of a positive school climate. A study conducted by Mafora (2013) also emphasises the importance of fairness by showing the consequences of unfair actions by principals. The study was on the social justice analysis of principals in secondary schools in Soweto. The findings of the study suggest that the participants in the study, namely learners and teachers, perceived their principals as lacking fairness because of the limitations in their leadership practices. This perceived unfairness of principals reportedly encouraged the teachers and learners to question, reject and sabotage management decisions. This indicates the importance of fairness by school principals.

The principals in this study highlighted that fairness led to a positive school climate; the following are excerpts from their questionnaires:

*“Being fair in one’s judgement and applying policy fairly contributes to a healthy school environment for both teachers and learners.”*

*“Focusing on being reasonable and fair to all - staff and learners. It creates a safe surrounding for everyone to express himself and realizing his full potential.”*

### ***Being positive***

Being positive as a principal is said to contribute towards creating a positive climate in a school. A positive climate can enhance staff performance, promote high morale, and improve student achievement (Kelley *et al.*, 2005:19). The review of literature in

Chapter 1 shows the importance of principals who are positive because there is a direct connection between leaders and employees' productivity and the organisation's performance. It is essential for leaders to maintain a positive work environment to maximize and enhance their employees' efforts to reach the organisational goals. A leader's behaviour accounts for nearly 25% of the reasons why people feel productive, motivated, energised, effective, and committed to their work (Holloway, 2012:10).

The following excerpts were taken from the questionnaire of the principals in this study:

*"I am positive... love children and affected by children."*

*"I stay positive, focused and create an enabling climate that colleagues find conducive to contribute positively in the school."*

*"I am positive, friendly person and goal driven. This definitely rubs off on a positive attitude at school."*

To create a positive school climate, principals must have the ability to foresee problems and be proactive. This factor will be discussed in the next section.

### ***Being proactive***

Some principals indicated that by being proactive they were able to create a positive school climate. The literature states that proactive principals are active and proactive in anticipating problems and needs in their educational environments (Walker, 2004:5). According to Guerrie (2014:1), consistent, proactive school leadership has been identified as a critical engagement for teachers. The proactive principal defines the vision for the school, sets the tone for inclusiveness, builds trusting relationships, and models resilience and adaptability.

The following are excerpts from the principals' questionnaires:

*"Proactive in the creation of a positive organizational culture and organizational culture."*

*“I take the initiative in most of things; in the school I arrive first, see that things are done that are supposed to be done – proactive.”*

### ***Being democratic***

Some of the principals in this study stated that they were able to create a positive school climate by being democratic in their interaction with both teachers and learners. The literature in Chapter 2 indicates that a democratic leadership style is based on the principles of democracy. Democracy is defined as a theory of government which, in its purest form, holds that the state should be controlled by all the people, each sharing equally in privileges, duties and responsibilities, and each participating in person. This means that a principal who adopts a democratic leadership style should allow the school to be controlled by all the stakeholders, each sharing equally in the privileges, duties and responsibilities. The most important stakeholders in the school will be the school management team and the educators, followed by the members of the School Governing Body, who are representatives of the parents. The active participation in person of each of these stakeholders is imperative for the principal to lead and manage the school as a democratic leader (Beeka, 2008:81). The findings in this study show that the principals held the view that using a democratic leadership style led to a positive school climate.

One of the principals stated the following:

*“I am a democratic principal who respects diversity in learners and respects the personalities of teachers”.*

### ***Staff development***

Staff development is another way of creating a positive school climate. In knowing that there are opportunities for growth in the profession motivates teachers and this contributes to a positive climate in the school.

This is supported by Linenburg (2010: 8) who emphasises the importance of staff development by stating that principals can use different means to change and improve

the instructional practices of teachers. Principals with a vision to improve their school climate may begin with a focus on improving teacher quality. These means to improve teacher quality contribute to staff development. The finding in this study show that the principals create a positive climate in their schools by ensuring staff development.

The following excerpts were taken from the questionnaires of the principals:

*“By grooming and training a second and third layer of leaders and managers out of SMT and teachers.”*

*“By being a staff developer.”*

### **Commitment**

The principals in this study stated that they maintain a positive school climate by showing commitment to their work. Research by Moos and Johansson (2011:63), supports this finding as they indicate that a good school is dependent on a committed principal. They further argue that commitment is defined as the state or quality of being that is dedicated to a cause or activity. Leaders who want to have an impact on the entire school system need to understand that commitment is a call for action.

Committing to work requires a high degree of persistence in order to obtain results. Thus, leaders need to commit to the implementation of school improvement processes at high levels and the development of a school culture that promotes learning (Mausbach & Morrison, 2016:3).

The principals on commitment commented as follows:

*“By being committed and focused.”*

*“Commitment and dedication.”*

## ***Leading by example***

Leading by example was identified by some of the principals in this study as a way of creating a positive school climate. In Chapter 2, the literature indicates that transformational leaders lead by example. Leading by example, according to Demir (2008:94), means a leader articulates the vision in a clear and appealing manner, explains how to attain the vision, acts confidently and optimistically, expresses confidence in the followers, emphasizes values with symbolic actions, and empowers followers to achieve the vision. In essence, transformational leadership is a process of building commitment to organisational objectives and then empowering followers to accomplish those objectives.

It is important for leaders to lead by example. Teachers need to see their principals treating their learners with respect. Setting the tone for how things should be done is crucial; it cannot be done via memorandum. Setting the proper positive tone has an observable action; it is rather like the expression “walk the talk”. Teachers need to see their principals as positive, upbeat people. There is no room in leading by example for unhappy, complaining, moody individuals. Learners also need to observe adults in their school as respectful, caring and positive (Bonilla, 2013:96). This is emphasised by the findings in this study, as the principals were of the opinion that they should lead by example.

The principals said the following:

*“Leading by example; capable to do what I expect from the staff.”*

*“Being exemplary.”*

*“Being a good role model, inculcating a culture of discipline and hard work, always bring a positive influence through actions to learners and education, at least as I see it.”*

### ***Involve all stakeholders in education***

In order for the principals to achieve a positive school climate, they must involve all the stakeholders in education. The principals in this study indicated that they achieved a positive school climate by involving all stakeholders in matters concerning the school, that is, teachers, learners, parents and the community were involved in education as they needed to work closely with the community to achieve their goals. Gichohi (2015:16) supports the findings of this study. Gichohi further states that research shows that improved instruction, better learning and enhanced school effectiveness are the most commonly cited reasons for implementing collaborative school practices such as school councils, collegial instructional leadership, and parent or community involvement. This is achieved because moving closer to the community and listening to the sentiments of concerned parties creates a synergy and interdependence or connectedness that promotes a learning organisation towards better decisions. Other scholars, according to Gichohi, believe that collaborative school practices bring about higher levels of employee motivation, morale and commitment (Gichohi, 2015:16).

Some of the school principals commented as follows to strengthen this view:

*“Listen to all stakeholders and make informed decisions.”*

*“I am trying to have some parents and teachers on my side.”*

*“I involve all stakeholders in decision-making and problem-solving so as to create a positive school climate.”*

### ***Maintain positive interpersonal relations***

Another way of creating a positive classroom climate is by maintaining positive relationships with all stakeholders in education. Belle (2007:88) supports this finding by stating that a school is an organisation of the people. As such, leaders must learn to lead, from the nexus of a web of interpersonal relationships, not from the apex of the organisation pyramid. Belle further argues that, there should no longer be a



hierarchy in schools, but a more community-oriented leadership where the principal should first seek to understand all the stakeholders, particularly teachers and learners.

The literature supports this finding as it states that principals are responsible for maintaining positive interpersonal relations by creating a climate that is collegial, interactive and focused on supporting the teacher and student throughout the education process. By setting the tone, principals cultivate teacher morale, parent partnership and professional collegiality, which in turn influences the delivery of instruction (Fultz, 2011:65).

As indicated in the literature, the responses of the principals in this study also emphasised the importance of maintaining positive interpersonal relationships with different stakeholders in education, especially teachers, parents and learners. They indicated that this contributed to positive interpersonal relations in the school environment.

Some principals commented:

*“I have good interpersonal relationships with my staff, learners and parents.”*

*“I try by all means to bring about harmony and cordial relationships among staff...”*

The foregoing findings tried to answer the following question:

*In what way do you see yourself as contributing towards a positive school climate and a healthy school?*

In all, the school principals see themselves as contributing positively towards the school climate. They cited various ways by which they contribute towards maintaining a positive school climate and consequently a healthy school.

The next section focuses on the findings of the semi-structured interviews.

## 6.6 Interview findings

As indicated in Chapter 4, semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to collect qualitative data from the principals. Interviews were conducted following the responses received from the questionnaires, which were completed by the principals. Thus, the information from the interviews was used to probe further aspects which needed clarity from the questionnaires. The interviews were conducted to supplement the information received from the questionnaires.

The respondents interviewed were 20 principals from secondary schools in the Free State Province. Of the 20 respondents, 14 were from the Motheo District, four were from the Xhariep District, one from the Lejweleputswa District, and one from the Fezile Dabi District. The principals were asked 14 questions on a number of aspects affecting their leadership practices, and consequently, affecting their leadership efficacy. The answers to these questions were grouped into different categories per question depending on the themes that came out from the responses of the principals. First, we focus on the factors which elevate the confidence of principals in the performance of their duties.

### ***6.6.1 Factors which elevate the confidence of the school principals in their work***

To the question: *As a school principal, what boosts or elevates your confidence in your work?*

The principals indicated a number of factors which elevated confidence in their work. These are:

- Passion for one's job
- Competence
- Team spirit
- Recognition for a job well done

### *Passion for one's job*

A number of principals stated that the confidence starts with the principal. If the principal is passionate about his or her job and loves what he or she does, he or she will perform because he or she is doing something that he or she loves. When one performs, that leads to confidence in one's job.

The following is an excerpt from a principal's response:

*"You must love your work. Have passion in your work. See yourself as a role model to learners who have no hope and give them hope."*

Another factor which elevated the confidence of principals was competence in their job.

### *Competence*

Competence was cited as one of the factors influencing the confidence of principals. The researcher argues that competence is linked to qualifications which links to Mastery Learning, which has been found to be one of the sources of self-efficacy, in this case, leadership efficacy. The principals in this study have high qualifications as reflected in Chapter 5.

On competence, some principals said:

*"It starts with myself, because of the level of my education. Performance".*

*"Knowing what to do and reading prescriptions of my job. Knowing that I add value to my colleagues and children at my school".*

*"My competence, knowledgeability and cooperation of all involved".*

The next factor which elevated the confidence of the principals was having staff with team spirit.

### *Team spirit*

On team spirit, some principals had this to say:

*“Working with people who are willing to work.”*

*“Team spirit, respect for work ethics, the desire to achieve from colleagues, irrespective of what the situation might be”.*

### *Recognition for a job well done*

Some of the principals in this study indicated that being acknowledged by the learners, the teachers and the Department of Education for performing their duties well, boosted their confidence.

Some of the responses of the principals are listed below:

*“When the school gets recognised for its performance one gets fulfilled. This also applies to winning prizes for performance in the District”.*

*“When teachers from my school get invited to go and present subjects to underperforming school.”*

*“Being acknowledged by learners. The small things that people do keep you going. Knowing that you are touching lives.”*

Recognition starts with an individual within a school and spreads to the district. Teachers get recognition for helping others and making a difference in other people's lives. It is important to note that school principals are aware of the factors that elevate their confidence and such factors should be taken into consideration as their confidence will invariably affect the performance of their duties.

The following section focuses on the factors that lower the principals' confidence in the performance of their duties.

### ***6.6.2 Factors which lower the confidence of principals in the performance of their work***

To the question: *What lowers your confidence or what affects your confidence negatively?*

The principals in this study identified a number of aspects which lowered their confidence. They indicated that a negative attitude by some staff members towards work was a concern; very low motivation among some staff members; the lack of cooperation and support from parents, teachers and learners; cliques in the work environment; absenteeism; pressure by the Department of Education; the lack of support from the District and Department of Education; and the lack of resources.

Some of the responses of the principals on these issues include the following:

- Negative attitude towards work.
- Cliques in the work environment.
- Lack of support from all teachers (senior and junior) as well as lack of support from parents.
- Gossips and a tendency of subordinates using management to fight personal issues.”
- Ill-discipline of both teachers and learners as it affects the performance of the school
- Absenteeism of educators

Some of the principals stated that their confidence was not influenced by factors in the school environment. They indicated that the factors in the school did not lower their confidence in their work. The principals said that some aspects of their work could affect their morale, and that their morale could be low because of this, but these aspects did not affect their confidence in their work at all.

On the case of the morale being affected some principals commented:

*“My confidence is not affected as such. What is affected is my morale. What affects my moral is seeing people not doing what they are supposed to do. Parents are not supportive. The Department of Education itself does not come to the party in addressing issues that concern us as principals.”*

*“Nothing affects my confidence negatively. It is just that I get frustrated when teachers undermine my authority.”*

The following section will focus on the responses of the principals on their interaction with staff and Departmental officials.

### **6.6.3 Interaction with staff**

To the question: *How do you interact with staff?*

Most of the principals indicated that their interaction with their staff was positive, cordial, good, open and democratic. Some stated that there was ongoing interaction between themselves and their staff. The overall interaction between principals and their staff members was good, but they also emphasised the fact that as much as they had cordial, open and positive relationships with their staff, there were some challenges. They also indicated that when it came to work they were firm.

Some of the principals observed that:

*“The school climate is amicable and filled with high expectations. It’s an ideal kind of a working relationship where lack of performance is addressed with vigour. The teachers are also allowed to challenge management.”*

*“We are few teachers, because our school is not a big school. We are a family. There are good relations with staff. We have the same vision. Generally we interact well. There are minor problems, but we are able to solve them. This is caused by the fact that I respect my staff. So, if you respect your staff they will respect you.”*

The next section focuses on relationship between principal-staff interaction and their efficacy as leaders.

#### **6.6.4 School principals attribute their interaction with staff to their efficacy as leaders**

To the question: *Would you attribute your interactions with your staff on your efficacy as a leader?*

The majority of the principals, that is 18 out of the 20 principals, stated that they attributed the interaction they had with their staff to their efficacy as leaders. Some of them indicated that if a person was confident, people would relate to you and listen to you, but if you were not confident no one listened to you. Other principals stated that they were also confident in their staff in that they were able to do their work.

The following are the excerpts from the principals who attributed their interaction with staff to their efficacy as leaders:

*“Definitely. I am knowledgeable on leadership. Participation in SADTU and community structures. Working in these structures helped boost my confidence.”*

*“With my confidence I am able to motivate staff. The relationship I have with staff is ideal, because we are able to do what we are supposed to do.”*

One of the principals responded as follows to the question:

*“Yes and no. Yes, my efficacy leads to confidence on their part and makes them cooperate willingly. And no, because the love of their school drives a lot of them to take initiative in realising collective goals.”*

One principal said that he did not attribute his interaction with staff to his efficacy as a leader. His reason for this was as follows:

*“I was deputy principal at this school, so I know them. I cannot say it’s because of my efficacy, but it’s because of the background I have with them.”*

### **6.6.5 Interaction with Departmental officials**

To the question: *How would you describe your interactions with the Departmental officials?*

The principals indicated that their interaction with the Departmental officials was characterised by respect. Some principals mentioned that good interaction with the Department of Education might be the reason for the good performance of their schools. The majority of the principals indicated that they had very good relationships with their immediate supervisors from the Department of Education and this could be the reason why there was good interaction between them and the Departmental officials.

The responses below are some of the excerpts of the principals on their interaction with the Departmental officials:

*“It is positive. There is also mutual respect between myself and the Departmental officials. They also act in an advisory capacity. They are supportive and I also have to be cooperative for the good of the school.”*

*“I have a good relationship with the DoE. They are cooperative when it comes to providing support. When one calls them, they come. I have support from the circuit manager. So it depends on your immediate supervisor.”*

Not all the principals were entirely happy about their interaction with the Departmental officials. Some of these principals' responses in this regard include the following:

*“It is sometimes hostile. One minute they are friendly, one minute they are not. They use an interrogating approach in their interaction.”*

*“Largely positive. Supportive to some extent. But sometimes we have to stop everything we do to attend to unplanned interactions. I would say we need more planned interaction with the Department of Education.”*



#### **6.6.6 School principals attribute their positive interaction with Departmental officials to their efficacy as leaders**

To the question: *Would you attribute your interactions with the Departmental officials to your efficacy (self-confidence) as a leader?*

The majority of the respondents stated that they would attribute their positive interaction with Departmental officials to their confidence as leaders. The following were some of the responses from the school principals:

*“Yes. The experience in working with the community in community structures has given me confidence in dealing with the Departmental officials.”*

*“Yes, I would say so. I do not have problems interacting with the Departmental Officials. If everything goes well at the school, you will not have problems interacting with the Departmental officials.”*

Other principals stated that the guidance and support they received from the Departmental officials, as well as knowing that the officials had confidence in them led to positive interaction with these officials. It also boosted their morale and indirectly contributed to their confidence.

One of the principals had this to say:

*“Yes. And I also think the confidence that the Department of Education has in me gives me confidence.”*

The following section focuses on the challenges experienced by the principals.

#### **6.6.7 Challenges experienced by principals**

##### ***Aspects perceived by principals as challenging***

To the question: *What aspects of your work do you perceive as challenging?*

The principals in this study highlighted a number of issues which they perceived as challenges in their work. These challenges included a lack of resources (both financial and human resources), a lack of discipline (the unruly behaviour of some learners e.g. bullying, theft, drug abuse, etc.), convincing parents to be part of the school, labour unions interfering with the decisions made by principals, dealing with people's egos (e.g. teachers), the School Governing Body not doing what it was supposed to do, and the pass rate in Grade 9 (especially in Mathematics and English).

The following are responses from the principals:

*“Funding is not enough and there’s a shortage of books as some learners do not have books. School principals are not in control as to when the funds will be deposited in the school’s account. Schools incur debt because of the late DoE payments. In some cases school principals use their own money for teaching equipment”.*

*“The union’s involvement and interference in management of staff. Non-payers of school fees. English Home language and Mathematics results are poor. It is difficult to improve these results.”*

*“People’s egos. Some teachers cannot admit when they are wrong. It’s important to admit when they are wrong.”*

### ***Reaction of principals to challenging situations***

To the question: *How do you react to challenging situation in your work?*

The principals stated that they stressed about the challenges initially, but felt more in control when they realised that matters were resolved easier when they were calm. Most principals said that they faced their challenges by finding ways of solving them. This was done by seeking advice from the School Management Team and other principals. At times, they sought support from the Department of Education in finding solutions to their problems.

The following are some of the verbatim responses of the respondents on how they dealt with challenges at their schools:

*“I face them head-on, depending on the challenge. Each case is dealt with accordingly. I engage people, even unions sometimes are engaged to solve issues. I also check what the law says.”*

*“I deal with them on the spot or delay them, depending on the challenge. For example, a delay in submission of marks is dealt with immediately. There are many challenges, learner challenges, teacher challenges, community challenges and parent challenges. When receiving a grievance I follow the grievance procedure. Sometimes I use the silent treatment if it’s a minor issue.”*

With the regard to the lack of resources, this is what one of the principals had to say:

*“Improvising. With regard to funds needed, I use my own money. Sharing resources is used as a means to cope with lack of resources. With regard to finances, I keep the staff aware of the school’s finances.”*

The findings show a number of challenges experienced by school principals and how they deal with them. The following section looks at what can be done by teachers, other principals and Departmental officials to boost the confidence of the principals.

## **6.6.8 Boosting the confidence of principals**

### ***How can teachers boost principals’ confidence in their work?***

To the question: *What in your opinion, needs to be done by teachers to boost your confidence?*

The principals in this study stated that the most important thing teachers could do to boost their confidence was to cooperate fully and do their work to the best of their ability. This meant that teachers must teach, be able to manage classes, and keep to

deadlines and due dates. Other aspects raised by principals were that if the teachers respected and trusted them, that would make them confident as leaders.

The following are some of the responses received from the school principals:

*“Do what is expected of them and to fulfil their work mandate. You have situations where a teacher is against everything and that leads to failure.”*

*“If they do their work to the best of their ability. If they do what they are paid for.”*

Other principals stated that confidence came from within and nothing could be done by teachers to boost their confidence. These were some of the responses:

*“I have learnt not to depend on other people to boost my confidence.”*

*“Nothing. They do not need to do anything to boost my confidence. Every time when teachers do good that boosts my confidence. Maybe they can in that way boost my confidence.”*

### ***How can principals boost one another's confidence?***

To the question: *What needs to be done by other principals to boost your confidence?*

One of the principals stated that nothing could be done by other principals to boost his or her confidence. Other principals said that their colleagues boost their confidence by providing support, cooperating with each other, working collaboratively with other principals, and sharing good practices.

The principals answered as follows:

*“If they can be cooperative and understanding in matters such as team teaching, especially in situations where we experience problems in a subject and they offer assistance.”*

*“Encouragement by other school principals. When I was appointed as school principal at my school in 2008, the pass rate for the Grade 12 learners the previous year was 34%. The support that I received from other school principals assisted a lot.*

*They kept on telling me that I can make it and change the situation at my school. In 2008 we achieved an 80% pass rate. From then we performed well. We received support from other school principals.”*

One principal indicated that at times they were not supportive of each other. This was what the principal said:

*“If they can share strategies. When you get to principal-ship as a new principal, the school principals who have been principals for years, never share their experiences as principals. Maybe it’s because there’s competition. Sometimes school principals from other schools would be running academic programmes for their schools and would approach teachers from my school to teach subjects at their school without discussing this with me first.”*

***What can the District office or the DoE do to boost the confidence of principals?***

To the question: *What needs to be done by the District Office and DoE to boost your confidence?*

The principals indicated that the District office or the Department of Education could boost their confidence by making resources (both financial and human resources) available, by responding quickly to requests made, by dealing promptly with matters of ill-discipline of both teachers and learners, and by providing support to them. The principals also highlighted a number of issues which affected their performance. They requested the Department of Education to reduce the administrative demands on them so they could focus more on teaching and learning. Clear communication was also highlighted as an important aspect by the principals. They stated that communication from the Department was not clear at times, and that the work they did was not always acknowledged by the Department. They were also of the opinion that the Department did not listen to their concerns.

These were some of the principals' answers:

*“They should support us. Have leadership programmes and I believe they should minimise administration for school principals. I also believe the DoE should have realistic targets for each school. Well done functions are organised by the DoE and this automatically boosts our confidence.”*

*“The DoE must listen to school principals. They do not take the inputs made by the school principals seriously.”*

*“Support school principals. Give advice and support lawful decisions by school principals. They must also regularly visit schools and encourage staff and the school principal.”*

The findings here show various options to boost the confidence of principals.

The next section examines the contribution of the principals to a positive school climate.

#### **6.6.9 School principals' description of the climate at their school**

To the question: *How would you describe the climate of your school?*

The majority of the principals referred to the school climate in their schools as positive, warm, friendly, relaxed, motivating, encouraging, accommodating, and sometimes challenging. Generally, the teachers cooperated with the principal and the learners also cooperated with teachers. The principals also highlighted that they had problems with some of teachers who did not do their job as expected and learners who did not cooperate, but they emphasised that the majority of the teachers and learners cooperated with them. Another aspect mentioned by the principals was that as much as the climate in their different schools was positive, it was difficult at the beginning. A positive school climate developed over time.

Some of the principals said the following regarding the climate in their schools:

*“Friendly, accommodating. Sometimes challenging. It’s small challenges but they create bigger problems.”*

Another principal said the following on the school climate:

*“There was a time I would describe the climate as very difficult. Sometimes I did not want to come to work. The climate is improving. It is now positive.”*

### ***Principals attribute the school climate to their leadership style or practice***

To the question: *Would you attribute the climate of your school to your leadership style or practice?*

The principals indicated that they attribute the positive school climate in their schools to their leadership style or practice. Others highlighted that their personality, as well as their leadership style, contributed to the positive climate in their schools. One principal said that a good School Management Team contributes to a positive classroom climate. The following excerpts are verbatim statements made by the principals:

*“Yes. I practice what I preach. I expect the teachers to be on time. I should be on time. Even on weekends I am at school as I expect them to be at school on weekends. I listen to their concerns, recommendations and suggestions.”*

*Yes exactly. The leader is the one who must steer things. As a leader I play an important role. I’m disciplined. I’m always on time. I’m always at work. I lead by example, self-respect and discipline is very important.”*

The following section will discuss the responses of principals on various ways of empowering them.

### **6.6.10 Empowering principals**

To the question: *Generally, what do you think should be done to empower school principal as leaders.*

The principals identified the following as important ways of empowering them:

Professional support from the Department of Education, interaction between principals, training in management, workshops on academic issues and general management challenges, be provided with information by the Department, develop skills in other management areas as principals are expected to excel in financial management, labour relations matters and marketing the school to potential sponsors, and make resources available to principals. Some of the principals emphasised the importance of them being trained in management. They stated that attending a management course should be a prerequisite for teachers aspiring to be a principal.

The following excerpts are the verbatim statements made by the principals on this matter:

*“Better training and selection before they become school principals. An acting principal academy, run by retired school principals and not academics, is hands-on practical training experience.”*

*“Flow of information from the DoE should be directed to the teachers because this would ease the burden on the school principals and would create a platform for engaging with staff on open discussions that would create common understanding because it’s a challenge if people do not have a common purpose.”*

Some of the principals mentioned self-empowerment as important to them. These principals explained that they should take initiative in empowering themselves. This is what one of the principals had to say on self-empowerment:

*“Take initiative through forums. Get a mentor from the DoE. Join school principal forums so they can share frustrations and support one another.”*



One principal indicated that they would be empowered if they were given the power to make decisions on the appointments of teachers and to decide which teacher(s) should be removed from their schools in cases where teachers were in excess.

The principal said the following on this matter:

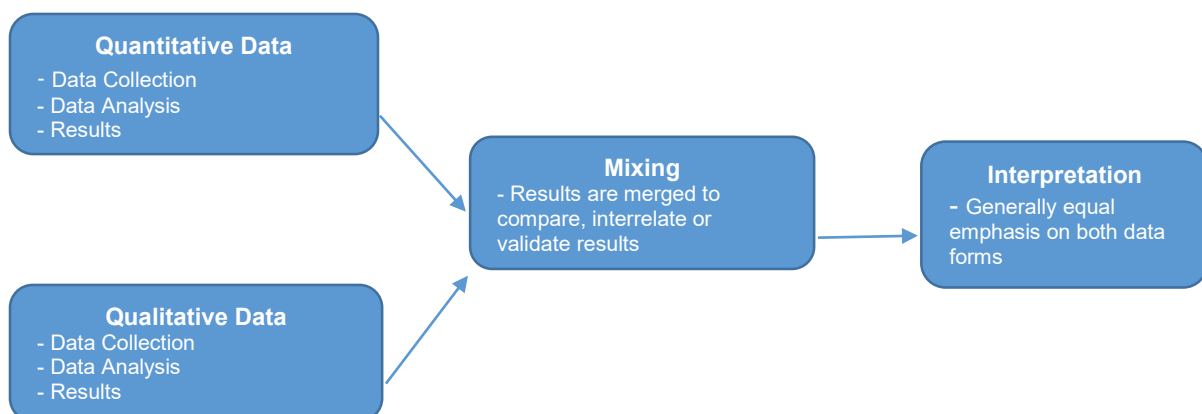
*“Principals must be able to recommend the appointment of teachers and recommend teachers who must be removed from their schools”.*

The ways in which principals can be empowered to perform their duties were identified. Principals highlighted what could be done to empower them.

The next section will focus on the integration of the quantitative and qualitative data.

## 6.7 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Integration refers to the point in the process of research procedures at which the researcher mixes or interprets the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis (Creswell, Fetters & Ivankova, 2004:9). In this study, the quantitative and qualitative results were merged to provide an overall picture of the findings. See Figure 6.1 below:



**Figure 6.1 Integration of quantitative and qualitative data** (Plano-Clark, Huddleston-Cassas, Churchill, Green & Garret, 2004:1551)

Integration of data here refers to the specific questions addressed. This would refer to the teaching qualifications, leadership styles and experience of the principal, and the contribution of the principal to the climate of the school. The quantitative and qualitative data were integrated in this study to confirm the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative data in Chapters 5 and 6. Another reason why the data was integrated was to compare the similarities and differences to interrelate and to validate the results in both the qualitative and quantitative data.

### **6.7.1 Discussion of integrated data**

The integrated data addressed Research Questions 3, 4 and 5 of this study.

#### *Qualifications*

The findings in both the qualitative and quantitative data emphasised the fact that the higher the qualification of principals, the higher their confidence in the performance of their duties. The interviews supported this finding. During the interviews, the principals were asked to indicate factors which elevated their confidence in their work. They indicated that the reason why they were confident in the performance of their duties was because of their competence in their work. When asked about what elevated their confidence, a principal offered the following response:

*“My competence, knowledgeability, and cooperation of all involved.”*

The competent principals received some formal training. This confirmed the results obtained in the quantitative data that the more qualified they were, the more confident they were in the performance of their duties.

#### *Experience*

The results of quantitative data showed that the leadership efficacy of principals with between 11 and 20 years' experience had higher leadership efficacy compared to the other principals. This means that the more experience the principals had, the higher

their leadership efficacy. This is emphasised by the response one of the principals gave when asked about what elevates his confidence as a leader. The following excerpt is the response given by the principal.

*“Many years of experience. Doing self-study into aspects of my work. Competent and dedicated team. Good results in the past. Potential of learners in the school. Supportive parents, SGB and community.”*

This means that the experience of the principals had an effect on their leadership efficacy.

### *Leadership styles*

The majority of the principals indicated in their responses to the questionnaires that they used a democratic leadership style, followed by principals who used a situational leadership style, which was followed by principals using a transformational leadership style. These forms of leadership styles contribute to a positive school climate. Most of the principals indicated that the climate in their schools was positive. During the interviews, the principals were asked if they could attribute the climate in their schools to their leadership styles or leadership practices. The principals stated that they attributed their school climate to their leadership styles. One of the principals said the following on this matter:

*“I would like to think so. I am not an autocratic leader. I am a democratic leader, I listen to people. I have an open-door policy for the teachers and the learners.”*  
*“I am attributing the school climate to my leadership style. I use all leadership styles.”*

### **School climate**

In the quantitative data, the analysis on the principal's contribution to the development of a positive school climate showed that the principals were confident in their ability to influence the school climate positively. The qualitative data supported this finding. During the interviews, when asked if they attributed the positive school climate in their

schools to their leadership styles or leadership practices, the principals said that they attributed the positive school climate in their schools to their leadership practices.

Some of them said the following:

*“It will always have a contribution. I try to lead my school by making sure that it is warm and positive.”*

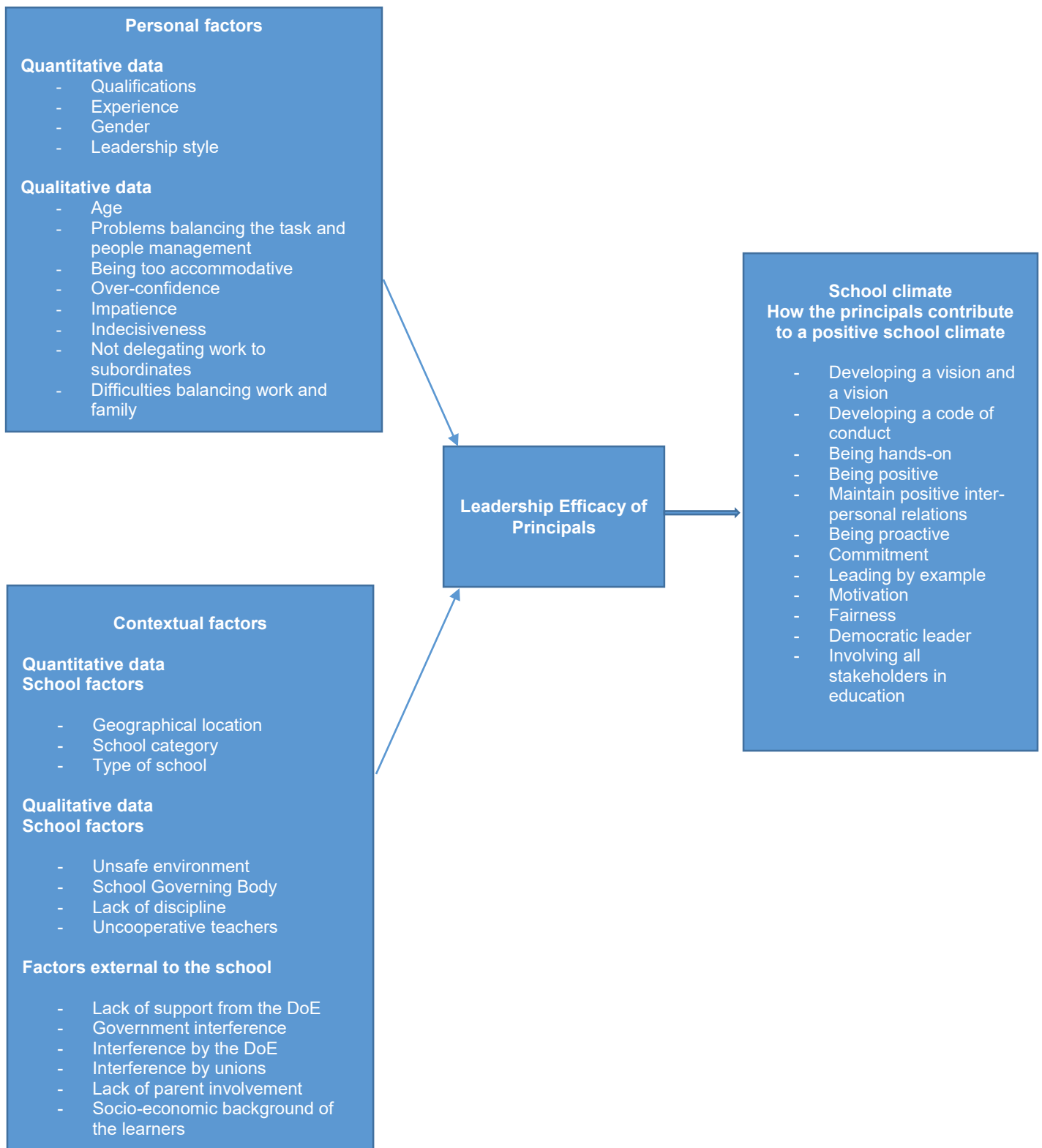
*“Yes, I am confident that my leadership skills have a big impact on the climate of the school.”*

In my view, the way in which the principals exercised leadership thus contributed to a positive school climate.

Other aspects identified by the principals in the creation of a positive school climate included developing a mission and a vision, assessing staff development needs, and motivating teachers.

The summary of the integrated data addressing Research Questions 3, 4 and 5 is shown in Figure 6.2. A number of personal factors and contextual factors were identified in the qualitative data as factors which affected the leadership efficacy of principals, and which in turn affected their leadership practices. This summary provides the personal factors, indicated in Chapter 5, which affected the leadership of the principals. The contextual factors which also affected the leadership efficacy of principals, as referred to in Chapter 5, included the geographical location of the school, the school category, and the type of school. The summary of these factors, both personal and contextual, identified in both the qualitative and quantitative data are indicated in Figure 6.2 below.

## 6.7.2 Integrated data



**Figure 6.2 Integrated data**

The next section will deal with the conclusion.

## 6.8 Conclusion

From the responses of the school principals in the open-ended questions it is clear that most of them in the Free State Province have received training in some aspects of school management and leadership. The majority of the principals (just over 50%) received training in financial management. This means that school principals who participated in this study received training in handling the finances of their school. However these school principals are not an overwhelming majority. Thus, there is a need for principals to be trained in financial management. The number of principals who received training in other management areas is a cause for concern as they need skills to lead and manage their schools. The importance of principals receiving pre- and in-service training cannot be over-emphasized as this training will make them competent in the performance of their duties as leaders. Competence will lead to high efficacy in the performance of their duties as principals. Principals should attend seminars, workshops and short courses in leadership and management to improve their management and leadership skills. Other aspects discussed in this chapter were personal, contextual factors which affected the leadership efficacy and the leadership practices of the principals. The integration of the qualitative and quantitative data was also addressed in this chapter. Finally, another aspect discussed in this chapter was the ways in which the principals contributed to creating a positive climate in their schools.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 7.1 Introduction

The aim of the study is to assess the leadership efficacy of school principals in different dimensions of their leadership roles, and to examine the factors (personal and contextual) which affect their leadership efficacy in secondary schools in the Free State Province and its impact on the climate of the school.

#### The research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the level of the leadership efficacy of secondary school principals in different dimensions of their leadership roles in the Free State Province?
2. To what extent do personal and contextual factors affect the leadership efficacy of school principals?
3. Are there differences in the leadership efficacy of school principals in performing their tasks as differentiated biographical factors such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school?
4. What other contextual variables affect the leadership practices of school principals?
5. In what way is the overall climate of the school affected by the school principal's leadership efficacy?

To be able to answer the research questions, it was necessary to review the literature related to the study. In Chapter 2 the focus was on the leadership and management of the school principals. It focused on leadership theories and the different leadership styles. Other aspects which were touched on this chapter were the problems in appointing school principals both internationally and in South Africa. In Chapter 3, the review of literature focused on the social cognitive theory and its relation to self-

efficacy, self-efficacy, and the different sources of self-efficacy. Chapter 3 also touched on leadership efficacy, the effect of the transformational and instructional leadership styles on the school climate, the leadership efficacy of principals, as well as the factors affecting the leadership efficacy of principals.

The next section focuses on the conclusions which the researcher has drawn from the results presented in Chapters 5 and 6. This chapter will focus on the discussion of the results, the recommendations, and the conclusion. Chapter 7, which is the last chapter, offers a discussion of the findings of the study to answer the research questions.

The research questions served as a guide to come up with the following hypothesis:

1. The level of leadership efficacy of secondary school principals in the Free State Province in the different dimensions of their leadership roles is high.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of efficacy of the school principals in the different dimensions of leadership.
3. Personal and contextual factors can affect the leadership efficacy of the school principals negatively.
4. There is no significant difference in the level of leadership efficacy of the school principals in the Free State Province as differentiated by biographical factors such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school.
5. There is a direct relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principals and their leadership practices.
6. There is a direct relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principals and the overall school climate.

## **7.2 Findings**

The research questions assessed the relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principals and its impact on the leadership practices of the principals and the overall climate of the school. The leadership efficacy was assessed in relation to



the eight dimensions, that is, Instructional leadership and staff development, School Climate Development, Community Collaboration, Data-based Decision making Aligned with Ethical Principles, Resource and Facility Management, Use of Community Resources, Communication in a Diverse Environment, and the Development of a School Vision. The leadership efficacy of school principals was also related to demographic factors such as qualifications, experience, gender, school district, geographical location, school category, school type and leadership. This study helps us to understand the leadership efficacy of principals and familiarises us with the various factors that impact on their leadership efficacy.

Below is the discussion of the findings.

### **7.3 Discussion of findings**

The findings are discussed in relation to the research questions and the corresponding hypotheses.

#### **7.3.1 What is the level of the leadership efficacy of the secondary school principals in the Free State Province in the different dimensions of their leadership roles?**

The hypothesis in line with the above question was that:

- The level of leadership efficacy of the secondary school principals in the Free State Province in the different dimensions of their leadership roles is high.

The findings on the level of the leadership efficacy per dimension show that the leadership efficacy of the principals in the Free State Province is high. The lowest mean is 4.73 and the highest mean is 5.77. The lowest mean score of 4.73 shows that even though the principals have a high leadership efficacy, some of them experience challenges with community collaboration. The highest mean of 5.77 shows that the principals are very confident in their ability to communicate in a diverse environment.

- The hypothesis that the level of leadership efficacy of the secondary school principals in the Free State Province in the different dimensions of their leadership roles is high may be accepted.

The following discussion is that of the second research question.

### **7.3.2 Is there a difference in the level of leadership efficacy of school principals in the Free State Province in the different dimensions of their leadership roles?**

The hypothesis in line with the above question was that:

- There is no significant difference in the level of efficacy of the school principals in the different dimensions of leadership.

The quantitative results of the study indicate that a one-way repeated measure ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in leadership efficacy dimensions. The results show that there were statistically significant differences in the leadership efficacy dimensions for the principals,  $F(2.824, 234.366) = 1350.283$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Post hoc analysis with a Bonferroni adjustment revealed that each of the leadership efficacy dimensions differed significantly from each other dimension ( $p < 0.05$  for all comparisons). The highest mean scores were obtained for Instructional leadership and staff development (Mean = 68.93), followed by Data-based decision making (Mean = 43.91), School climate development (Mean=37.17), Community collaboration (Mean=33.08), Communication in a diverse environments (Mean=28.86), Resource and facility management (Mean = 25.99), Development of a school vision (Mean=22.48), and finally, Use of community resources (Mean=14.77).

- Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the level of efficacy of the school principals in the different dimensions of leadership may not be accepted as the findings show a significant difference in the leadership efficacy dimensions.

The following discussion will address the third question and this question focused on the personal and contextual factors affecting the leadership efficacy of the school principals.

### **7.3.3 To what extent do personal and contextual factors affect the leadership efficacy of the school principals?**

The hypothesis in line with the above question was that:

- Personal and contextual factors can affect the leadership efficacy of the school principals negatively.

Self-efficacy beliefs are task and context-specific because people do not feel equally efficacious in all situations. Principals may feel efficacious for leading in particular contexts, but this sense of efficacy may or may not transfer to other contexts (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005:573). Sindhvad (2009:22) also indicates that the organisational context in which a leader works has an important influence on what he or she can do.

In the open-ended questions in the questionnaire distributed to the school principals and during the interviews, the principals indicated a number of personal as well as contextual factors which affected their leadership efficacy. The principals stated that the personal factors which affected their leadership efficacy included their age, being more people-oriented than task-oriented, and being too democratic. The school principals further stated that because of their age the older teachers took advantage of them and did not perform their duties as expected. The same applied to being people-oriented and too democratic. If a principal is too people-oriented, both teachers and learners take advantage of the principal and do not perform their duties as well as expected. Other personal factors which affected the leadership efficacy of the principals included over-confidence, not delegating work to subordinates, being a perfectionist, impatience, being indecisive, and having difficulty in maintaining a balance between work and family life. All these personal factors affected the school principals negatively in the performances of their duties, which in turn affected their confidence in their work.

The contextual factors affecting the school principals negatively included a lack of support and interference by the DoE, interference by labour unions in the principals' performance of their duties, a lack of resources, the socio-economic background of learners, unsafe environments, an uncooperative School Governing Body, and the lack of cooperation from the teachers, learners and parents. All these contextual factors made it difficult for the school principals to perform their duties and this had a negative impact on their leadership efficacy.

- Thus, the hypothesis that there is a relationship between the personal and contextual factors and the leadership efficacy of the school principals may be accepted.

The following section focuses on addressing the fourth research question.

#### **7.3.4 Are there differences in the leadership efficacy of the school principals in performing their tasks as differentiated by biographical factors such as highest qualifications, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school?**

The hypothesis in line with the above question was that:

- There is no significant difference in the level of leadership efficacy of the school principals in the Free State Province as differentiated by biographical factors such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school.

#### ***Highest qualification***

Table 5.2 presents the results on the subscales by qualification. The school principals with Master's degrees had a high leadership efficacy in seven of the eight subscales when compared to the principals who had other qualifications. This means the higher the qualification, the higher the self-efficacy of school principals in instructional leadership and staff development, school climate development, data-based decision-making, resource and facility management, use of community resources,

communication in a diverse environment, and development of a school vision. Even though based on the results, most of the school principals with a Master's degree had the highest leadership efficacy in most subscales, the principals with an Honours degree had an edge over the other principals in community collaboration. The school principals with a B.Ed. Honours degree showed a slightly higher leadership efficacy in this subscale compared to the other principals.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance was run to determine the effect of highest qualification achieved on leadership efficacy. Eight measures of leadership efficacy were assessed: Total scores for Instructional Leadership and Staff Development; School Climate and Development; Community Collaboration; Data-Based Decision Making Aligned with Legal and Ethical Principles; Resources and Facility Management; Use of Community Resources; Communication in a Diverse Environment; and Development of a School Vision. Participants were grouped into three categories depending on their highest qualifications, namely, Master's degrees, Honours degrees, and Bachelors degrees or other qualifications. The difference between individuals with varying highest levels of qualifications on the combined dependent variables was not statistically significant,  $F=1.641$ ;  $p=0.065$ . Thus, it seems that leadership efficacy did not differ significantly between the principals with differing highest levels of education.

### ***Experience***

Table 5.26 indicates that school principals with 16 to 20 years' experience and those with 11 to 15 years' experience have a higher leadership efficacy, compared to the other principals. The school principals with 11 to 15 years' experience have a higher leadership efficacy in the use of community resources, communication in a diverse environment, and the development of a school vision. School principals with 16 to 20 years' experience show a high leadership efficacy in the following dimensions of leadership: instructional leadership and development, school climate development, community collaboration, data-based decision making aligned with legal and ethical principles, and resource and facility management.

A factorial multivariate analysis was run in this study to determine the effect of experience on leadership efficacy. The differences between the different years of experience of the combined dependent variable was not statistically significant ( $F=0.756$ ,  $p=0.33$ ). Thus, it appears that leadership efficacy did not differ between the principals with differing years of experience.

The literature supports the findings of the study, that, the more success experienced by school principal in the performance of his or her duties, the more confident he or she becomes. Sewell & St George (2009:60), agree that the experience of having performed well in a leadership situation will lead to high leadership efficacy. This view is also emphasised by Cherry (2010:3) when he states that the most effective way to create a strong sense of efficacy is through the mastery of experiences. Performing a task successfully strengthens a person's sense of efficacy.

### ***Gender***

Table 5.27 shows that the leadership efficacy of male school principals is higher than female school principals in instructional leadership and staff development, school climate development, data-based decision making aligned with legal and ethical principles, the use of community resources, and the development of a school vision. The female school principals have leadership efficacy that is slightly higher than male school principals in community collaboration, resource and facility management, and communication in a diverse environment.

A factorial multivariate analysis of variance was run to determine the effect of gender on leadership efficacy. The difference between genders on the combined dependent variable was not statistically significant ( $F=800$ ,  $p=0.604$ ). This means that there is no significant difference in the leadership efficacy of school principals based on gender. Adegbesan (2013:52) supports this finding because in his own study he also found that gender differences did not affect principals' administrative effectiveness. This is in agreement with the factorial multivariate analysis that was run in this study to determine the effect of gender on leadership efficacy, which indicates that there is no difference in the leadership efficacy of principals as determined by gender.

### ***Geographical location***

Table 5.29 indicates that there is a difference in the leadership efficacy of school principals. The leadership efficacy of the principals in the town schools had an edge over the leadership efficacy of the principals in the township and farm schools. It is important to note though that this difference was not statistically significant ( $F=0.661$  and  $p=0.733$ ). There was no significant difference in the leadership efficacy of the school principals differentiated by geographical location. This means leadership efficacy did not differ between the school principals based on their different geographical locations.

- Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the level of leadership efficacy of the school principals in the Free State Province as differentiated by biographical factors such as highest qualification, experience, gender, and the geographical location of the school may be accepted.

The following section will focus on the fifth research question.

#### **7.3.5 What other contextual variables affect the leadership practices of school principals?**

The hypothesis in line with the above question was that:

- There is a relationship between the contextual factors of the school and the leadership practices of the school principals.

In open-ended questions, the school principals were asked to indicate the contextual factors which have an effect on their leadership practices. The responses they gave include the following: support on the part of the parents is inadequate, parents not attending scheduled meetings, parent who do not take the education of their children seriously, and parents who do not cooperate with the school.

The literature supports these findings as it identifies a number of other contextual factors that have an effect on the leadership practices of school principals. According to Atieno and Simatwa (2012:390), contextual factors that have an effect on school principals' leadership practices include issues such as inadequate teaching and learning resources, student absenteeism, non-committed staff, financial constraints and teacher shortages. These authors further categorise these challenges as support staff management-based challenges, teacher management-based challenges, student management-based challenges, challenges that arise from parent involvement in school activities, and financial management-based challenges, which include incompetence, shortage of staff, poor morale, absenteeism and a negative attitude. The teacher management-based challenges include insubordination, uncooperative staff, incompetence, absenteeism and a shortage of teachers (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012:391).

Jackson, Tumer and Battle (2015:32) state that another contextual factor affecting the school principal's leadership practices includes the frustration of principals regarding poor parent attendance at school events. School principals also complain of the small number of rude parents, insulting parents, and sometimes violent parents who discourage the school staff from seeking greater parent involvement. Student management-based challenges are poor performance in national exams, absenteeism, high enrolments, and a shortage of textbooks (Atieno & Simatwa, 2012:391). In a study conducted by Preetika and Priti (2013:40), it was found that a lack of parent involvement is a problem for principals as they need the support of parents.

- Thus, the hypothesis that there is a relationship between the contextual factors of the school and the leadership practices of the school principals can be accepted.

The following discussion focuses on the sixth and final research question.



### **7.3.6 In what way is the overall climate of the school affected by the school principal's leadership efficacy?**

The hypothesis in line with the above question was that:

- There is a direct relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principal and the overall school climate.

The findings of this study indicate that the school principals have an effect on the school climate. During interviews, the school principals were asked to describe the climate of their schools. Most of the principals stated that their school climate was positive and they attributed the climate to their leadership style. In other words, the school principals were confident that their leadership efficacy affected their leadership practices, and consequently, the school climate. In an open-ended question in the questionnaire, the principals were asked to explain ways in which they contributed to creating a positive school climate in their school. They indicated a number of ways in which they contributed to creating a positive school climate. This is an indication of the fact that the principals believed that they had an effect on the school climate.

The school climate is the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, that is, the educators and the learners. It affects their behaviour and is based on their collective perception of behaviour in the school. A positive school climate can enhance staff performance, promote higher morale, which will then contribute positively to the well-being of educators. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well-functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult, if not impossible (Kelley *et al.*, 2010:19).

Literature supports the findings of the study. Smith, Guarino & Olin (2010:3) state that school principals have a critical role to play in schools. Their behaviour is believed to be central to the creation and facilitation of an effective teaching and learning environment within a school. The literature, according to Kelley *et al.* (2010:19), indicates that researchers have related a principal's behaviour to the school climate. Indeed, the climate of a school can be shaped by the actions and behaviour of a

principal. Principals have the power, authority and position to impact the climate of a school.

- Thus, the hypothesis that there is a relationship between the leadership efficacy of the school principal and the school climate can be accepted.

The next section focuses on the recommendations of the study.

## **7.4 Recommendations**

### **7.4.1 Personal factors affecting the leadership efficacy of school principals**

#### ***Qualifications***

The findings indicated that the higher the qualification, the higher the confidence of the school principals in the performance of their duties. The Department of Education thus needs to ensure that the people who are appointed as school principals are qualified to do so. Appointing people who qualify to lead means we appoint people who have the knowledge to lead. This knowledge will contribute towards school principals who perform at their best. Performing at their best will yield positive results which will in turn boost their leadership efficacy.

#### ***Gender***

The findings indicated that there was no difference in the leadership efficacy of school principals, as determined by gender. This means that gender has no effect on the leadership efficacy of school principals. The findings indicate that both males and females are capable to manage and lead schools.

An observation made by the researcher is that in this study, there were a large number of male school principals and a very low number of female school principals. The researcher recommends that in appointing school principals, the Department of Education should ensure equal opportunities are given to competent males and females to be appointed as school principals.

#### **7.4.2 Contextual factors affecting the leadership efficacy of school principals**

##### ***Lack of resources***

The findings showed that the school principals experienced the challenge of a lack of resources in their schools. The school principals were of the opinion that a lack of resources was a problem as some resources were not bought, as planned. This posed problems in the day-to-day functioning of the schools. Due to lack of resources some of the goals set by both the school and the Department of Education may not be met. This may have a negative effect on the school principal and his or her leadership practices as the objectives set by the school principals may not be realised.

In line with this argument, the researcher suggests that the Department of Education addresses the lack of resources by providing the schools with the resources they need; these resources should also be made available timeously.

Another aspect raised by the school principals was the fact that teachers worked extra time without any remuneration. A school principal also indicated that teachers worked abnormal hours. The recommendation in this regard is that the Department of Education should provide resources for the remuneration of teachers who are expected to work beyond their normal working hours.

##### ***The Department of Education***

The findings indicated that a number of school principals were unhappy with the Department of Education. They highlighted unclear communication from the Department, a lack of support from the Department, interference by Departmental Officials, and unrealistic expectations by the Department. The school principals are accountable to the Department of Education and the issues raised by school principals need to be addressed because of their negative effect on the school principal. In trying to resolve these concerns, the Department should provide support to the principals, allow the principals to make decisions if these decisions are in the interest of the school, have realistic targets for each school, and disseminate clear information to the schools.

## ***Parents***

Parents are an important component of the school community. The lack of support from parents and parents who are not cooperative in regard to the education of their children, were some of the challenges highlighted by school principals. The lack of support by parents has a negative effect on the leadership of school principals. The achievement of goals depends on the support the school principal gets from the parents. When the school fails to achieve its goals the person who has to account is the school principals. The recommendation is that the school principals, the teachers, the parents, the learners, the community and the Department of Education should work together and find ways of tackling the problem of parents who are not involved in the education of their children. The Department, with the assistance of school principals and teachers, can organise training workshops for parents on how they can become involved in their children's education.

## ***The socio-economic status of learners***

In the findings the issue of socio-economic status was indicated as one of the challenges that influenced the leadership practices of the school principals. The Department of Education has certain programmes in place that help principals to deal with the problems associated with the socio-economic status of learners. Programmes, such as the state feeding scheme, have been running in schools for years, providing food to schoolchildren. The problem experienced by principals in this regard is that funding provided by the Department of Education might not be enough to meet all the needs of the school. Parents might be expected to assist by paying a certain amount to the school. If the school is situated in an environment characterised by poverty then the school principal will have challenges in running these programmes in case he or she needs funds from the parents. When the parents are not able to assist to raise funds the school might not function the way it should. This will have a negative effect on the leadership practices of the school principals and their leadership efficacy.

Another issue raised by school principals regarding the socio-economic status of learners was the issue of gangsterism. The issue of safety in and outside schools

remains a challenge. The school principal might be expected to intervene and resolve conflicts that are gang-related in the school premises. This means school principals must find ways of dealing with gangsterism in the school premises. Little can be done by the school principal if their school is situated in a society where there are gangs, which can affect their confidence in handling this challenge. The commendation is that the community, the Department of Education, the school community and the South African Police Service need to come together and devise ways of dealing with this challenge as it affects communities.

### ***Teachers***

In these findings the school principals highlighted the issue of inexperienced teachers and losing teachers who are highly qualified to top positions. Inexperienced teachers need to adjust to the system and some of them may not perform as experienced teachers. As a result their performance may influence the performance of the whole school negatively. The performance of schools is very important to school principals. Their ability to manage and lead schools is measured on the performance of their schools. If the school does not perform the school principals may develop a negative leadership efficacy, since their performance to lead is judged against the performance of learners in their schools.

To address the problems associated with inexperienced teachers, the recommendation is that schools can introduce effective mentorship programmes. Mentors should be allocated to new teachers to orientate them in the profession. Highly qualified teachers could be kept in their teaching positions if they were offered incentives.

### ***Change and resistance to change***

Change and resistance to change was also highlighted as a factor that influenced the school principals' leadership practices and consequently affected their leadership efficacy. If the school principal is able to introduce change with ease, this influences his or her leadership efficacy positively, but if the school principal struggles with change this might influence him or her negatively.

Change is inevitable in any society because societies change all the time. The findings showed that some of the principals had attended workshops on managing change. This means that the Department of Education is training school principals on the management of change. Since principals have been trained on managing change, in addition to training as school principals, the recommendation would be to the School Management Team, the members of the School Governing Body, and the teachers in management of change. The involvement of the stakeholders involved in education would assist in reducing the chances of resistance to change.

### ***Lack of discipline***

The findings of this study indicated that school principals faced the challenge of a lack of discipline in schools among the learners and the teachers. The school with good discipline performs well and school principals in such a school are very confident in their ability to lead, because discipline goes hand in hand with good performance by the learners. The opposite is also true, where there's lack of discipline by the learners and teachers, the performance of the school will be negative. Good discipline by both teachers and learners leads to positive leadership efficacy and lack of disciplines leads to negative efficacy by the school principal.

The Department of Education has provided rules and regulations to deal with disciplinary issues in schools. The principals need the support of all stakeholders involved in education to enforce these rules and regulations when dealing with discipline in schools, especially the Department of Education. The recommendation is that the Department of Education, the parents and the labour union representatives support the principal in enforcing discipline when the right procedures are followed.

### ***Time management***

The findings indicated that school principals struggle with time management because of the excessive workload attached to their position. Time management is very important. If school principals are not able to manage their time, this will have a negative effect on their performance, and consequently on their leadership efficacy. Some of the principals indicated that they had attended workshops on time

management organised by the Department of Education. Since time management remains a major problem for principals, the recommendation is that principals, teachers and the administrative team of schools be given training in this regard.

### ***Administration***

Another finding was that the school principals indicated that most of their time at work was absorbed by doing paperwork. If they focus only on managing teaching and learning, the performance in their school will improve. When the performance of the school improves, the confidence of school principals in performing their duties as school leaders will also improve. This will have a positive effect on the school principal and contribute positively on their leadership efficacy.

The recommendation is that the Department of Education reduces the administrative duties of principals so they can focus on managing the teaching and learning environment.

### ***Labour unions***

Labour unions were mentioned by the principals as one of the factors that impacted negatively on their leadership practices. This is caused by the interference of Unions on some of the decisions made by the school principal and his or her management team. This interference by Unions can have a negative effect on the school principals. At times there are power struggles between the school principals and the Unions, if the school principals perceive the Union as being more powerful in the school, this might have a negative effect on the school principals' confidence in managing staff.

The recommendation is that there should be clearly stipulated guidelines on the role that should be played by the unions in schools. The Department of Education should protect and support the school principals in enforcing these guidelines. Unions should not be allowed to interfere with school principals in the performance of their duties.

### ***Absenteeism of teachers and learners***

Absenteeism of both teachers and learners is a challenge in schools. This may result in poor performance by both teachers and learners. Poor performance by the school is viewed negatively by both the parents and the Department of Education. If the school does not perform well, this is linked with the inability of the school principal to manage his school. This will influence the way the school principal views his ability to manage the teachers and the learners in a negative way.

There are policies in place on dealing with the absenteeism of both teachers and learners. The recommendation in this regard is that school principals should apply the policies that are available to deal with absenteeism in a strict but fair manner.

### ***Lack of teamwork***

The findings indicated that staff members who do not function as part of a team made it hard for the school to achieve mutual goals. The ability to influence teachers to achieve goals is very important. Achieving mutual goals is as important as achieving individual goals. If the school principals fails to convince his team to work towards achieving goals, the school principal will perceive this as failure. This will then negatively influence affect the leadership efficacy of the school principal negatively.

Therefore the recommendation in this regard is that school principals should involve all the staff members in finding ways to promote the spirit of teamwork in their schools.

### ***Training prior and after being appointed as school principals***

The findings showed that school principals who received training either prior or after being appointed indicated higher levels of leadership efficacy than those who did not receive any form of training in management or leadership. The Department is currently providing bursaries to teachers and school principals to further their studies. School principals should be motivated to register for educational management courses. The recommendation is that for prospective school principals, qualifications



in educational management and leadership should be compulsory. In this manner the schools will appoint principals who have received formal training in management.

## 7.5 Implications

Leadership efficacy is important in managing school successfully. The findings of the study have indicated some implications for leadership practices:

- Provision of support to school principals  
The school principals need support. The Department of Education should provide support to the school principals in the performance of their duties.
- Provision of resources to schools  
The Department of Education should ensure that the resources are provided timeously in schools. The availability of resources has a direct impact on how the school performs. Resources lead to the achievement of goals and this will have a positive effect on the school principal leadership practices.
- Gender equality in appointing school principals should be promoted  
The results of the study show that the majority of school principals who participated in the study are male. 85% male school principals compared to 15% female principals who participated in the study. A lot needs to be done to ensure gender equality in appointing school principals.
- Issue timeous notices for school principals  
The Department of Education should provide timeous notices for school principals. There are instances where school principals have to drop everything they do and put pressure on teachers to submit information needed at short notice by the DoE. If the school principals cannot deliver, they will be seen as incapable of performing their duties. This may affect leadership by the school principals negatively. The DoE should give principals enough time to perform their duties.

- Issue clear information

Another issue raised by school principals is that communication from the DoE is not clear. It is important for the Department of Education to give clear instructions and requests to school principals, so they know what is expected of them.

## **7.6 Recommendations for further study**

The recommendations for further study are discussed in this section.

The aim of this study was to assess the leadership efficacy of school principals in the Free State Province. A further study may focus on the following:

Assessing the effect of leadership efficacy of school principals on teacher efficacy and the organisational health of the school.

Another aspect that does not clearly come out from this study is whether the different qualifications of school principals have an impact on their leadership efficacy. This is also an aspect that can be explored further in future research to assess the impact of the qualifications of principals on their leadership efficacy.

It is also recommended that for further research the study can be carried out in primary schools in the Free State Province. By assessing the leadership efficacy of school principals in primary schools, a comparison can be done between those in primary schools and those in secondary schools.

## **7.7 Contribution to new knowledge**

The South African Standard for School Leadership (SASSL) published by the Department of Education in 2005, prescribed the following key roles of school principals: Leading and managing learning; shaping the direction and development of the school; assuring quality and securing accountability; developing and empowering the self and others; maintaining the school as an organisation; and working with and for the community. The Wallace Foundation listed the following as key responsibilities

of school principals: Developing a vision, creating a hospitable climate in their schools, cultivating leadership in others, improving instruction and managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement (The Wallace Foundation, 2013:6).

In 2016 The Minister of Basic Education Mrs AM Motshekga (2016:13) published eight interdependent key areas that constitute the core purpose of the principal of any South African school. The Minister further indicates that the school principals need knowledge to carry out the actions that are required in the eight key areas. These key areas are:

- Leading teaching and learning in the school
- Shaping the direction and development of the school
- Managing quality of teaching and learning and securing accountability
- Developing and empowering self and others
- Managing the school as an organisation
- Working with and for the community
- Managing human resources (staff) in the school
- Managing and advocating extra-mural activities (Government Gazette, 2016:13)

The last two bullets indicate areas that have been added to the 2005 SASSL list.

This study assessed the leadership efficacy of school principals in secondary schools in the Free State province. Leadership efficacy, a type of self-efficacy, is defined as a person's belief that he or she can exercise headship successfully and set direction for teamwork and build relations with followers to gain their commitment to changing the goals (Paglis and Green in Villanueva and Sanchez, 2007:350). The study was informed by the SASSL, the literature consulted as well as instruments used to measure principal leadership efficacy touched on eight dimensions of leadership that are similar to those identified as core leadership responsibilities of a school principal. The leadership efficacy of school principals in this study was found to be moderate to high in the identified leadership roles. Although this was the case, the principals identified factors that affected their leadership functions positively and negatively. Factors which affect leadership efficacy positively, included the following: Passion for

one's job, competence, team spirit and recognition for a job well done. Factors which affected the leadership efficacy negatively included the following: A negative attitude towards work, cliques in the work environment, gossips and a tendency of subordinates using management to fight personal issues, ill-discipline of both teachers and learners as it affects the performance of the school, absenteeism of educators and lack of support from teachers, parents and the Department of Education.

The study has identified some strategies that could be used to address the factors which affect school principals' leadership efficacy negatively, and which also affect the performance of their roles as well as the overall school climate negatively. These strategies are discussed in the recommendations of the study and include the following: Training in management and leadership of prospective school principals, appointment of school principals with qualification in educational management, provision of resources to schools by the Department of Education, and provision of support to the school principals by the DoE, parents, teachers, administrative staff and learners. All these strategies will lead to the achievement of goals by the school and that achievement will be attributed to the school principal and the School Management Team. This will in turn motivate the school principal and lead to the positive leadership efficacy of the school principal.

The study will, therefore, make a contribution in the continuing discourse or debate on the leadership roles of school principals in South African schools. The study will also alert District Officials as well as the Free State Department of Education about the factors that affect leadership efficacy of school principals and the effect leadership efficacy has on the performance of their leadership practices.

## **7.8 Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to assess the leadership efficacy of school principals and its impact on their leadership practices and the school climate. It is important to note that the school principals in this study were assessing themselves in the performance of their duties as principals. As indicated in the literature review, extensive studies have been conducted on the self-efficacy of teachers and learners, but there are very few studies on leadership efficacy. As a result it was a struggle to find literature relevant

to this study both in South Africa and internationally. Hopefully this study is just the beginning of many studies that will be conducted in future on the leadership efficacy of school principals.

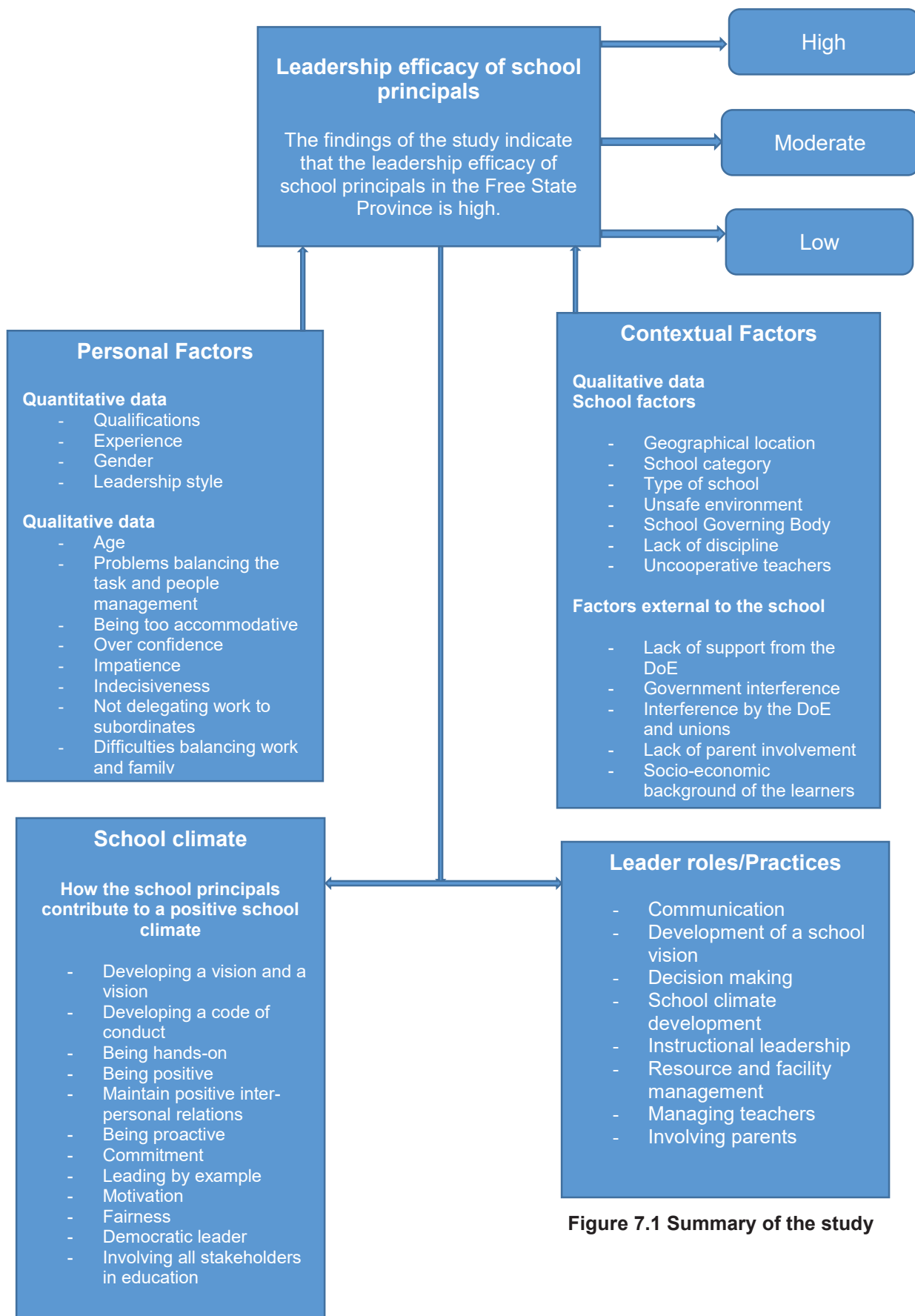
Studies of this nature can make a positive contribution in South Africa. This study can assist the Department of Education in designing programmes, both pre-service and in-service, that will meet the needs of school principals, specifically those in the Free State Province.

The study has created awareness for the Free State Department Education of the factors which affect the leadership practices of school principals. These factors may have a positive or a negative impact on principals. There are contextual factors (in-school factors) and external factors (factors outside the school) that have a negative impact on the leadership practices of principals. The aim of identifying these factors was to ensure that ways are devised of dealing with them. Not all factors affect school principals in a negative manner. Some of the school principals have highlighted the fact that they receive support from the Department of Education, which has made them independent. It is important that the positives about the Department are also highlighted so they can build on these to strengthen their support to school principals.

Based on the findings of this study, the Departmental officials will be aware of the personal factors of school principals that affect their leadership practices. This gives the Department insight into which personal factors pose a challenge to school principals. This is aimed at finding solutions to the factors and assisting school principals to be better managers.

Finally, the ways in which school principals contributed towards a positive school climate or healthy school were also highlighted by the school principals in this study. These can be shared with other school principals to ensure that effective leadership is achieved by all school principals in the Free State Province.

## 7.9 Summary of the entire study



**Figure 7.1 Summary of the study**

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## APPENDICES

## **Appendix A**

### **Letter requesting permission from the Department of Education to conduct research**



Central University of  
Technology, Free State

Central University of Technology Free State

Faculty of Humanities

1 Park Road

Bloemfontein

9300

24 February 2014

The Chief Education Specialist  
Free State Department of Education  
Private Bag X20565  
Bloemfontein  
9300

Dear Principal

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

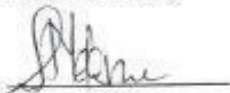
I am doing research on Leadership efficacy of school principals and its effect on their leadership practices.

Secondary schools in the Free State Province will be visited to seek for assistance in completing this research project.

I hereby request permission to conduct research at your school.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



P.L. Ndamani (Ms.)

## **Appendix B**

### **Letter from the Supervisor requesting permission to conduct research**



Central University of Technology Free State  
Faculty of Humanities  
1 Park Road  
Bloemfontein  
9300  
24 February 2014

The Chief Education Specialist  
Free State Department of Education  
Private Bag X20565  
Bloemfontein  
9300

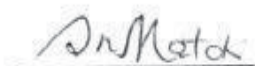
#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to confirm that Ms PL Ndamani is a registered student for a PhD qualification in Education at the Central University of Technology, Free State. She is now (2014) about to administer questionnaires to collect data from secondary school principals in the Free State province.

The research project is on *the leadership efficacy of school principals and its effect on their leadership practices*.

The findings of this study will be made available to the Free State Department of Education, when needed.

Thank you.



PROF SN MATOTI (SUPERVISOR)

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Letter from the Department of Education granting permission to conduct research**





## **APPENDIX D**

### **Research Ethics Requirements**

Enquiries: JR Phori  
Reference: Ethics Doc  
Tel: 051 404 9258  
E-mail: phorj@edu.fs.gov.za



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**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR:  
STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY AND RESEARCH**

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Mis Ndamani PL

27.02. 2014

Madam

**RE: ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS: FREE STATE EDUCATION**

The scientific research enterprise is built on a foundation of trust and that the reports by others are valid. The reports should reflect an honest attempt by the researcher to describe the world accurately and without bias; this trust will endure only if the researcher devotes himself or herself to exemplifying and transmitting the values associated with ethical research conduct.

There are many ethical issues to be taken into serious consideration when conducting research. The Free State Department of Education believes that the researchers conducting research in this department would, amongst others, adhere to the following ethical conduct:

**1. ETHICS: GENERAL APPLICATION:**

- Researchers need to be aware of having the responsibility to secure the actual permission and interests of all those involved in the study;
- They should not misuse any of the information discovered;
- There should be a certain moral responsibility maintained towards the participants;
- There is a duty to protect the rights of people in the study as well as their privacy and sensitivity;
- The confidentiality of those involved in the observation must be carried out, keeping their anonymity and privacy secure;

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[www.fsdoe.fs.gov.za](http://www.fsdoe.fs.gov.za)

## **Appendix E**

### **Questionnaire to School Principals**

The aim of this questionnaire is to help us gain a better understanding of the leadership efficacy of school principals and its effect on their leadership practices. You are requested to respond to the questions honestly. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

## SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please make a cross (X) in the appropriate box representing appropriate responses to the following items about **yourself and your school**.

### 1. YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

Doctoral Degree	1
Master's Degree	2
Honours Degree	3
Bachelors Degree	4
Other (Specify)	5

### 2. YOUR EXPERIENCE AS PRINCIPAL

Less than 5 years	1
6-10 Years	2
11- 15 Years	3
16-20 Years	4
Other (Specify)	5

### 3. YOUR GENDER

F	1
M	2

### 4. SCHOOL DISTRICT

Xhariep	1
Motheo	2
Lejweleputswa	3
Thabo Mofutsanyana	4
Fezile Dabi	5

### 5. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF YOUR SCHOOL

Farm	1
Township	2
Town	3

### 6. SCHOOL CATEGORY

Agricultural Sec. School	1
Comprehensive Sec. School	2
Ordinary Sec. School	3

### 7. SCHOOL TYPE

Farm	1
Independent (Private)	2
Public	3

### 8. YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE

Autocratic	1
Democratic	2
Transformational	3
Transactional	4
Situational	5
Other (specify)	6

**9. DID YOU GET FORMAL TRAINING IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRIOR TO PRINCIPALSHIP?**

Yes	1
No	2

**10. IF YOUR ANSWER TO QUESTION 9 ABOVE IS YES, WHAT FORM OF TRAINING DID YOU GET?**

ACE in Educational Management	1
B. Ed. Honours in Educational Management/Leadership	2
Other (Specify)	3

**11. HAVE YOU ATTENDED WORKSHOPS IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT DURING YOUR TENURE AS PRINCIPAL?**

Yes	1
No	2

**12. IF YOUR ANSWER TO QUESTION 11 ABOVE IS YES, WHAT WAS THE DURATION OF THE WORKSHOP?**

One day	1
Two days	2
One week	3
Other (Specify)	4

**13. WHAT CONTENT WAS COVERED IN THE WORKSHOP?**


**P.T.O FOR SECTION B**

## SECTION B: LEADERSHIP EFFICACY

The Leadership Efficacy Scale used here consists of eight dimensions of leadership. You are requested to indicate your opinion about the questions in each dimension by ticking the appropriate box. The response mode used varies from one (1) which means “**not confident at all**” to seven (7) which means “**very confident**”.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT								
In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Your skills to assess the staff development needs of your school.							
2.	Your knowledge of best practice research related to instructional practices.							
3.	Your ability to develop a systematic process for mentoring teachers in your school.							
4.	Understanding the process of curriculum design, implementation and evaluation.							
5.	Possessing the skills needed to implement the effective use of resources so that priority is given to supporting learners.							
6.	Your skills to engage staff in the development of effective school improvement plans that result in improved learning.							
7.	Understanding the development of a professional growth plan.							
8.	Leading staff to appreciate the kinds of knowledge and skills learners and their families can add to the learning process.							
9.	Your ability to understand and communicate to staff the complex instructional and motivational issues that are presented by a diverse learner population.							
10.	Your understanding of all of the instructional programmes in your school.							
11.	Your skills to lead staff to understand and respect the diversity of your learner population.							
12.	Your ability to demonstrate the effective use of technology to your fellow teachers.							
13.	Having a clear sense of your own personal development needs and the resources you can access to address those needs.							

## SCHOOL CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	Your ability to assess school climate using multiple methods.							
15.	Your ability to engage parents in the assessment of your school climate.							
16.	Your ability to engage staff in the assessment of your school climate.							
17.	Your knowledge to use information about your school to encourage appropriate learner behavior.							
18.	Your knowledge to use information about your school climate to support a positive learning environment.							
19.	Your knowledge to use information about your school climate to improve the school culture in ways that promote staff morale.							
20.	Your ability to engage learners in the assessment of your school climate.							

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	Your ability to solicit community resources to resolve school issues.							
22.	Your ability to supplement school resources by obtaining resources from the community.							
23.	Your ability to use marketing strategies and processes to create partnership with business, community and institutions of higher education.							
24.	Understanding community relations models that are needed to create partnerships with business, community and institutions of higher education.							
25.	Your ability to identify and describe the services of community agencies that provide resources for the families of children in your school.							
26.	Your ability to resolve issues relating to budgeting.							
27.	Your skills to involve families and community stakeholders in the decision-making process at your school.							



### DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING ALIGNED WITH LEGAL AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	Your ability to explain to staff and parents how the decisions in your school are related to state and national institutions policies.							
29.	Your ability to explain to staff and parents the decision-making process of your school.							
30.	Your ability to explain the role of law and education policies in shaping the school community.							
31.	Your ability to examine learner performance data to extract the information necessary for school improvement planning.							
32.	Your ability to apply appropriate research methods pertaining to the performance of your school.							
33.	Your ability to make decisions within the boundaries of ethical and legal principles.							
34.	Your ability to understand and evaluate education research that is related to programmes and issues in your school.							
35.	Making sound decisions and having the ability to explain them based on professional, ethical, and legal principles.							

### RESOURCE AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36.	Finding information to address problems with facilities, in accordance with legal principles.							
37.	Your ability to provide safe facilities (building, playground), according to legal principles.							
38.	Your ability to find the appropriate personnel to resolve facility-related problems.							
39.	Your knowledge of legal principles that promote educational equity.							
40.	Your ability to identify additional resources to assist all of the individuals in your school.							

### USE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41.	Your ability to use community resources to achieve school goals.							
42.	Your ability to use community resources to solve school problems.							
43.	Your ability to use community resources to support learner achievement.							

### COMMUNICATION IN A DIVERSE ENVIRONMENT

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44.	Being sensitive to student diversity.							
45.	Knowing that your learners and colleagues can trust you to be ethical in handling sensitive information.							
46.	Your communication abilities to lead in a variety of educational settings.							
47.	Your skills to interact positively with the different groups that make up your school community.							
48.	Your ability to lead your staff in involving parents in the education of their children.							

### DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL VISION

In your current role as principal, how confident are you in:

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49.	Your ability to develop a vision that will help ensure the success of all learners							
50.	Possessing the skills to lead a school community to the development of clear vision.							
51.	Your ability to use strategic processes to develop the vision of the school.							
52.	Your ability to establish two-way communication with stakeholders (staff, parents, learners and community) in order to obtain the commitment necessary for implementing the vision for your school.							

## SECTION C

1.	<b>WHAT CONTEXTUAL FACTORS WOULD YOU SEE AS AFFECTING YOUR LEADERSHIP PRACTICES? EXPLAIN.</b>

2.	<b>WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK THESE FACTORS HAVE ON YOUR LEADERSHIP PRACTICES? EXPLAIN.</b>

3.	<b>WHAT PERSONAL FACTORS WOULD YOU SEE AS AFFECTING YOUR LEADERSHIP PRACTICES? EXPLAIN.</b>

4.	<b>WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK THESE FACTORS HAVE ON YOUR LEADERSHIP PRACTICES? EXPLAIN.</b>

5.	<b>IN WHAT WAY DO YOU SEE YOURSELF AS CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE AND A HEALTHY SCHOOL? EXPLAIN.</b>

Thank you for your participation.

P.L. Ndamani (Doctoral Student)

## **Appendix F**

### **Interview questions**

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The title of my work is: Leadership Efficacy of secondary school principals in the Free State Province. This study assessed the leadership efficacy of school principals in different dimensions of their leadership roles. This interview is a follow up on the questionnaire data collected from them.

**1. As a school principal, what boosts or elevates your confidence in your work?**


**2. What lowers your confidence or what affects your confidence negatively?**


**3. How would you describe your interactions with your staff?**


**4. Would you attribute your interactions with your staff on your efficacy as a leader?**


**5. How would you describe your interactions with Departmental officials?**


**6. Would you attribute your interactions with Departmental officials to your efficacy (self-confidence) as a leader?**


**7. What in your opinion needs to be done by teachers to boost your confidence?**


**8. What needs to be done by other principals to boost your confidence?**


**9. What needs to be done by the District Office and DoE to boost your confidence?**


**10. What aspects of your work do you perceive as challenging?**


**11. How do you react to challenging situations in your work?**


**12. How would you describe the climate of your school?**


**13. Would you attribute the climate of your school to your leadership style/practice?**


**14. Generally, what do you think should be done to empower school principals as leaders?**
